

P O E M S

BY

JAMES THOMSON.



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V I Z.

B R I T A N N I A,

TO THE MEMORY OF LORD TALBOT,

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE,

A N D

LESSER POEMS:

WITH

ALFRED, A MASQUE,

BY

MR. THOMSON AND MR. MALLET.

G L A S G O W:

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SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

Inscribed to the Right Honourable

Sir ROBERT WALPOLE.

SHALL the great soul of NEWTON quit this earth,
 To mingle with his stars; and every Muse,
 Astonish'd into silence, shun the weight
 Of honours due to his illustrious name?

But what can man?——Even now the sons of light,
 In strains high-warbled to seraphic lyre,
 Hail his arrival on the coast of bliss.

Yet am I not deter'd, though high the theme,
 And sung to harps of angels; for with you,
 Aethereal flames! ambitious, I aspire
 In Nature's general symphony to join.

And what new wonders can you show your guest!
 Who, while on this dim spot, where mortals toil
 Clouded in dust, from Motion's simple laws,
 Could trace the secret hand of Providence,

Wide-working thro' this universal frame.

Have ye not listened, while he bound the suns
 And planets to their spheres ! th' unequal task
 Of human kind till then. Oft had they roll'd
 O'er erring man the year, and oft disgrac'd
 The pride of schools, before their course was known
 Full in its causes and effects, to him,
 All-piercing sage ! who fate not down and dream'd
 Romantic schemes, defended by the din
 Of specious words, and tyranny of names;
 But, bidding his amazing mind attend,
 And with heroic patience years on years
 Deep-searching, saw at last the system dawn,
 And shine, of all his race, on him alone.
 What were his raptures-then ! how pure ! how strong !
 And what the triumphs of old Greece and Rome,
 By his diminish'd, but the pride of boys
 In some small fray victorious ! when instead
 Of shatter'd parcels of this earth usurp'd
 By violence unmanly, and sore deeds
 Of cruelty and blood, Nature herself
 Stood all-subdu'd by him, and open laid
 Her every latent glory to his view.
 All intellectual eye, our solar round
 First gazing thro', he by the blended power
 Of *gravitation* and *projection* saw
 The whole in silent harmony revolve.
 From unassisted vision hid, the moons
 To chear remoter planets numerous form'd,
 By him in all their mingled tracts were seen.

He also fix'd our wandering queen of night :
Whether she wanes into a scanty orb,
Or, waxing broad, with her pale shadowy light,
In a soft deluge overflows the sky.

Her every motion, clear discerning, He
Adjusted to the mutual Main, and taught
Why now the mighty mass of water swells
Resistless, heaving on the broken rocks,
And the full river turning ; till again
The tide revertive, unattracted, leaves
A yellow waste of idle sands behind.

Then breaking hence, he took his ardent flight
Thro' the blue infinite ; and every star,
Which the clear concave of a winter's night
Pours on the eye, or astronomic tube,
Far-stretching, snatches from the dark abyfs,
Or such as farther in successive skies
To fancy shine alone, at his approach
Blaz'd into suns, the living centre each
Of an harmonious system : all combin'd,
And rul'd unerring by that single power,
Which draws the stone projected to the ground.

O unprofuse magnificence divine !
O wisdom truly perfect ! thus to call
From a few causes such a scheme of things,
Effects so various, beautiful, and great,
An universe compleat ! and, O belov'd
Of Heaven, whose well-purg'd penetrative eye,
The mystic veil transpiercing, inly scann'd
The rising, moving, wide-establish'd frame.

4 TO THE MEMORY OF 76.

He, first of men, with awful wing pursu'd
The Comet thro' the long elliptic curve,
As round innumerable worlds he wound his way;
Till, to the forehead of our evening sky
Return'd, the blazing wonder glares anew,
And o'er the trembling nations shakes dismay.

The heavens are all his own; from the wild rule
Of whirling *vortices* and circling *spheres*,
To their first great simplicity restor'd.
The Schools astonish'd stood; but found it vain
To combat still with demonstration strong,
And, unawaken'd, dream beneath the blaze
Of truth. At once their pleasing visions fled,
With the gay shadows of the morning mix'd,
When NEWTON rose, our philosophic sun.

Th' ærial flow of Sound was known to him,
From whence it first in wavy circles breaks,
Till the touch'd organ takes the message in.
Nor could the darting Beam, of speed immense,
Escape his swift pursuit, and measuring eye.
Even Light itself, which every thing displays,
Shone undiscover'd, till his brighter mind
Untwisted all the shining robe of day;
And, from the whitening undistinguish'd blaze,
Collecting every ray into his kind,
To the charm'd eye educ'd the gorgeous train
Of parent-colours. First, the flaming Red
Sprung vivid forth; the tawny Orange next;
And next delicious Yellow; by whose side
Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing Green.

Then the pure Blue, that swells autumnal skies,
 Aethereal play'd; and then, of sadder hue,
 Emerg'd the deepned Indico, as when
 The heavy skirted evening droops with frost.
 While the last gleamings of refracted light
 Dy'd in the fainting Violet away.
 These, when the clouds distil the rosy shower,
 Shine out distinct adown the wat'ry bow;
 While o'er our heads the dewy vision bends
 Delightful, melting on the fields beneath.
 Myriads of mingling dyes from these result,
 And myriads still remain——Infinite source
 Of beauty, ever-flushing, ever-new!

Did ever Poet image aught so fair,
 Dreaming in whispering groves, by the hoarse brook!
 Or prophet, to whose rapture heaven descends!
 Even now the setting sun and shifting clouds,
 Seen, Greenwich, from thy lovely heights, declare
 How just, how beauteous the *refractive law*.

The noiseless tide of time, all bearing down
 To vast eternity's unbounded sea,
 Where the green islands of the happy shine,
 He stemm'd alone; and to the source (involv'd
 Deep in primaeval gloom) ascending, rais'd
 His lights at equal distances, to guide
 Historian, wilder'd on his darksome way.

But who can number up his labours? who
 His high discoveries sing? when but a few
 Of the deep-studying race can stretch their minds
 To what he knew; in fancy's lighter thought,

How shall the Muse then grasp the mighty theme?

What wonder thence that his devotion swell'd
Responsive to his knowledge! for could he,
Whose piercing mental eye diffusive saw
The finish'd university of things,
In all its order, magnitude, and parts,
Forbear incessant to adore that Power
Who fills, sustains, and actuates the whole?

Say, ye who best can tell, ye happy few,
Who saw him in the softest lights of life,
All unwithheld, indulging to his friends
The vast unborrow'd treasures of his mind,
Oh speak the wondrous man! how mild, how calm,
How greatly humble, how divinely good;
How firm establish'd on eternal truth;
Fervent in doing well, with every nerve
Still pressing on, forgetful of the past,
And panting for perfection: far above
Those little cares, and visionary joys,
That so perplex the fond impassion'd heart
Of ever-cheated, ever-trusting man.

And you, ye hopeless gloomy-minded tribe,
You who, unconscious of those nobler flights
That reach impatient at immortal life,
Against the prime endearing privilege
Of being dare contend, say, can a soul
Of such extensive, deep, tremendous powers,
Enlarging still, be but a finer breath
Of spirits dancing thro' their tubes a while,
And then for ever lost in vacant air?

But hark ! methinks I hear a warning voice,
Solemn as when some awful change is come,
Sound thro' the world—" 'Tis done ! the measure's full ;
And I resign my charge."—Ye mouldering stones,
That build the towering pyramid, the proud
Triumphal arch, the monument effac'd
By ruthless ruin, and whate'er supports
The worship'd name of hoar antiquity,
Down to the dust ! what grandeur can ye boast,
While NEWTON lifts his column to the skies,
Beyond the waste of time. Let no weak drop
Be shed for him. The virgin in her bloom
Cut off, the joyous youth, and darling child,
These are the tombs that claim the tender tear
And elegiac song. But NEWTON calls
For other notes of gratulation high,
That now he wanders thro' those endless worlds
He here so well descried, and wondering talks,
And hymns their Author with his glad compeers.

O Britain's boast ! whether with angels thou
Sittest in dread discourse, or fellow-blest,
Who joy to see the honour of their kind ;
Or whether, mounted on cherubic wing,
Thy swift career is with the whirling orbs,
Comparing things with things, in rapture lost,
And grateful adoration, for that light
So plenteous ray'd into thy mind below,
From LIGHT himself : Oh look with pity down
On human kind, a frail erroneous race !
Exalt the spirit of a downward world !

O'er thy dejected country, chief preside,
 And be her *Genius* call'd! her studies raise,
 Correct her manners, and inspire her youth:
 For, tho' deprav'd and sunk, she brought thee forth,
 And glories in thy name; she points thee out
 To all her sons, and bids them eye thy star:
 While in expectance of the second life,
 When time shall be no more, thy sacred dust
 Sleeps with her kings, and dignifies the scene.

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P O E M.

——Et tantas audetis tollere moles?

Quos ego—sed motos praestat componere fluctus.

Post mihi non simili poena commissa luetis.

Maturate fugam, regique haec dicite vestro:

Non illi imperium pelagi, saevumque tridentem,

Sed mihi sorte datum.——

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AS on the sea-beat shore BRITANNIA sat,
Of her degenerate sons the faded fame,
Deep in her anxious heart, revolving sad :
Bare was her throbbing bosom to the gale,
That hoarse, and hollow, from the bleak surge blew :
Loose flow'd her tresses; rent her azure robe.
Hung o'er the deep, from her majestic brow
She tore the laurel, and she tore the bay.
Nor ceas'd the copious grief to bathe her cheek ;
Nor ceas'd her sobs to murmur to the main.
Peace discontented nigh, departing, stretch'd
Her dove-like wings: and War, tho' greatly roused,
Yet mourn'd his fetter'd hands. While thus the queen
Of nations spoke; and what she said the Muse
Recorded, faithful, in unbidden verse.

Even not yon sail, that, from the sky-mix'd wave,
Dawns on the sight, and wafts the ROYAL YOUTH*,
A freight of future glory to my shore;
Even not the flattering view of golden days,
And rising periods yet of bright renown,
Beneath the PARENTS, and their endless line

* Frederick Prince of Wales, then lately arrived.

Thro' late revolving time, can soothe my rage;
While, unchastis'd, th'insulting Spaniard dares
Infest the trading flood, full of vain war,
Despise my navies, and my merchants seize;
As, trusting to false peace, they fearless roam
The world of waters wild, made, by the toil,
And liberal blood of glorious ages, mine:
Nor bursts my sleeping thunder on their head.
Whence this unwonted patience? this weak doubt?
This tame beseeching of rejected peace?
This meek forbearance; this unnative fear,
To generous Britons never known before?
And sail'd my fleets for this; on Indian tides
To float, unactive, with the veering winds?
The mockery of war! while hot disease,
And sloth distemper'd, swept off burning crouds,
For action ardent; and amid the deep,
Inglorious, sunk them in a watery grave.
There now they ly beneath the rolling flood,
Far from their friends, and country, unaveng'd;
And back the drooping war-ship comes again,
Dispirited. and thin; her sons ashamed
Thus idly to review their native shore;
With not one glory sparkling in their eye,
One triumph on their tongue. A passenger,
The violated merchant comes along;
That far-fought wealth, for which the noxious gale
He drew, and sweat beneath equator suns,
By lawless force detain'd; a force that soon
Would melt away, and every spoil resign,

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Were once the British lion heard to roar.
Whence is it that the proud Iberian thus,
In their own well-asserted element,
Dares rouse to wrath the masters of the main ?
Who told him that the big incumbent war
Would not, ere this, have roll'd his trembling ports
In smoaky ruin ? and his guilty stores,
Won by the ravage of a butchered world,
Yet unatton'd, sunk in the swallowing deep,
Or led the glittering prize into the Thames ?

There was a time (oh let my languid sons
Resume their spirit at the rousing thought !)
When all the pride of Spain, in one dread fleet,
Swell'd o'er the lab'ring surge ; like a whole heaven
Of clouds, wide-roll'd before the boundless breeze.
Gaily the splendid armament along
Exultant plow'd, reflecting a red gleam,
As sunk the sun, o'er all the flaming Vast ;
Tall, gorgeous and elate ; drunk with the dream
Of easy conquest ; while their bloated war,
Stretch'd out from sky to sky, the gather'd force
Of ages held in its capacious womb.
But soon, regardless of the cumbrous pomp,
My dauntless Britons came, a gloomy few,
With tempest black, the goodly scene deform'd,
And laid their glory waste. The bolts of fate
Resistless thunder'd thro' their yielding sides ;
Fierce o'er their beauty blaz'd the lurid flame ;
And seiz'd in horrid grasp, or shatter'd wide,
Amid the mighty waters, deep they sunk.

Then too from every promontory chill,
Rank fen, and cavern where the wild wave works,
I swept confed'rate winds, and swell'd a storm.
Round the glad isle, snatch'd by the vengeful blast,
The scatter'd remnants drove; on the blind shelve,
And pointed rock, that marks th' indented shore,
Relentless dash'd, where loud the northern main
Howls thro' the fractur'd Caledonian isles.

Such were the dawns of my wat'ry reign;
But since how vast it grew, how absolute,
Even in those troubled times, when dreadful BLAKE
Aw'd angry nations with the British name,
Let every humbled state, let Europe say,
Sustain'd, and balanc'd, by my naval arm.
Ah what must those immortal spirits think
Of your poor shifts? Those, for their country's good,
Who fac'd the blackest danger, knew no fear,
No mean submission, but commanded peace.
Ah how with indignation must they burn!
(If aught but joy, can touch aethereal breasts)
With shame! with grief! to see their feeble sons
Shrink from that empire o'er the conquer'd seas,
For which their wisdom plan'd, their councils glow'd,
And their veins bled thro' many a toiling age.

Oh first of human blessings! and supreme!
Fair Peace! how lovely, how delightful thou!
By whose wide tie, the kindred sons of men,
Like brothers live, in amity combin'd,
And unsuspecting faith; while honest toil
Gives every joy, and to those joys a right,

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Which idle, barbarous rapine but usurps.
Pure is thy reign ; when, unaccurs'd by blood,
Nought, save the sweetness of indulgent showers,
Trickling distils into the vernant glebe ;
Instead of mangled carcases, sad seen,
When the blythe sheaves lye scatter'd o'er the field ;
When only shining shares, the crooked knife,
And hooks imprint the vegetable wound ;
When the land blushes with the rose alone,
The falling fruitage, and the bleeding vine.
Oh, Peace ! thou source and soul of social life ;
Beneath whose calm inspiring influence,
Science his view enlarges, Art refines,
And swelling Commerce opens all her ports ;
Blest be the man divine, who gives us thee !
Who bids the trumpet hush his horrid clang,
Nor blow the giddy nations into rage ;
Who sheathes the murderous blade ; the deadly gun
Into the well-pil'd armory returns ;
And every vigour from the work of death
To grateful industry converting, makes
The country flourish, and the city smile.
Unviolated, him the virgin sings ;
And him the smiling mother to her train.
Of him the shepherd, in the peaceful dale,
Chaunts ; and, the treasures of his labour sure,
The husbandman of him, as at the plough,
Or team, he toils. With him the sailor sooths,
Beneath the trembling moon, the midnight wave ;
And the full city, warm, from street to street,

And shop to shop, responsive, rings of him.
Nor joys one land alone; his praise extends
Far as the sun rolls the diffusive day;
Far as the breeze can bear the gifts of peace,
Till all the happy nations catch the song.

What would not, Peace! the patriot bear for thee?
What painful patience? what incessant care?
What mix'd anxiety? what sleepless toil?
Even from the rash protected what reproach?
For he thy value knows; thy friendship he
To human nature: but the better thou,
The richer of delight, sometimes the more
Inevitable war, when ruffian force
Awakes the fury of an injur'd state.
Even the good, patient man, whom reason rules;
Rouz'd by bold insult, and injurious rage,
With sharp and sudden check, th' astonish'd sons
Of violence confounds; firm as his cause,
His bolder heart; in awful justice clad;
His eyes effulging a peculiar fire:
And, as he charges thro' the prostrate war,
His keen arm teaches faithless men, no more
To dare the sacred vengeance of the just.

And what, my thoughtless sons, should fire you more,
Than when your well-earn'd empire of the deep
The least beginning injury receives?
What better cause can call your lightening forth?
Your thunder wake? your dearest life demand?
What better cause, than when your country sees
The sly destruction at her vitals aim'd?

For oh it much imports you, 'tis your all,
To keep your trade entire, entire the force,
And honour of your fleets; 'o'er that to watch
Even with a hand severe, and jealous eye.
In intercourse be gentle, generous, just,
By Wisdom polish'd, and of manners fair;
But on the sea be terrible, untam'd,
Unconquerable still: let none escape,
Who shall but aim to touch your glory there.
Is there the man, into the lion's den,
Who dares intrude, to snatch his young away?
And is a Briton seiz'd? and seiz'd beneath
The slumbering terrors of a British fleet?
Then ardent rise! oh great in vengeance rise;
O'erturn the proud, teach rapine to *restore*:
And as you ride sublimely round the world,
Make every vessel stoop, make every state
At once their welfare and their duty know.
This is your glory; this your wisdom; this
The native power for which you were design'd
By fate, when fate design'd the firmest state
That e'er was seated on the subject sea;
A state, alone, where Liberty should live,
In these late times, this evening of mankind,
When Athens, Rome and Carthage are no more,
The world almost in slavish sloth dissolved.
For this, these rocks around your coast were thrown;
For this your oaks, peculiar harden'd, shoot
Strong into sturdy growth; for this, your hearts
Swell with a fullen courage, growing still

As danger grows; and strength, and toil for this
 Are liberal pour'd o'er all the fervent land.
 'Then cherish this, this unexpensive power,
 Undangerous to the public, ever prompt,
 By lavish nature thrust into your hand :
 And unencumber'd with the bulk immense
 Of conquest, whence huge empires rose, and fell
 Self-crush'd, extend your reign from shore to shore,
 Where'er the wind your high behests can blow,
 And fix it deep on this eternal base.
 For should the sliding fabric once give way,
 Soon slacken'd quite, and past recovery broke,
 It gathers ruin as it rolls along,
 Steep-rushing down to that devouring gulph,
 Where many a mighty empire buried lyes.
 And should the big redundant flood of trade,
 In which ten thousand thousand labours join
 Their several currents, till the boundless tide
 Rolls in a radiant deluge o'er the land,
 Should this bright stream, the least inflected, point
 Its course another way, o'er other lands
 The various treasure would resistless pour,
 Ne'er to be won again; its antient tract
 Left a vile channel, desolate, and dead,
 With all around a miserable waste.
 Not Egypt, were, her better heaven, the Nile
 Turn'd in the pride of flow; when o'er her rocks,
 And roaring cataracts, beyond the reach
 Of dizzy vision pil'd, in one wide flash
 An Ethiopian deluge foams amain;

(Whence wondering fable trac'd him from the sky)
Even not that prime of earth, where harvests croud
On untill'd harvests, all the teeming year,
If of the fat o'erflowing culture robb'd,
Were then a more uncomfortable wild,
Steril, and void; than of her trade depriv'd,
Britons, your boasted isle: her princes sunk;
Her high-built honour moulder'd to the dust;
Unnerv'd her force; her spirit vanish'd quite;
With rapid wing her riches fled away;
Her unfrequented ports alone the sign
Of what she was; her merchants scatter'd wide;
Her hollow shops shut up; and in her streets,
Her fields, woods, markets, villages, and roads,
The chearful voice of labour heard no more.

Oh let not then waste luxury repair
That manly soul of toil which strings your nerves,
And your own proper happiness creates!
Oh let not the soft penetrating plague
Creep on the free-born mind! and working there,
With the sharp tooth of many a new-form'd want,
Endless, and idle all, eat out the heart
Of Liberty; the high conception blast;
The noble sentiment, th' impatient scorn
Of base subjection, and the swelling wish
For general good, erasing from the mind:
While nought save narrow selfishness succeeds,
And low design, the sneaking passions all
Let loose, and reigning in the rankled breast.
Induc'd at last, by scarce-perceiv'd degrees,

Sapping the very frame of government,
And life, a total dissolution comes ;
Sloth, ignorance, dejection, flattery, fear,
Oppression raging o'er the waste he makes ;
The human being almost quite extinct ;
And the whole state in broad corruption sinks.
Oh shun that gulph, that gaping ruin shun !
And countless ages roll it far away
From you, ye heaven-beloved ! May Liberty,
The light of life ! the sun of human kind !
Whence heroes, bards, and patriots borrow flame,
Even where the keen depressive North descends,
Still spread, exalt, and actuate your powers !
While slavish southern climates beam in vain.
And may a public spirit from the throne,
Where every virtue sits, go copious forth,
Live o'er the land ! the finer arts inspire ;
Make thoughtful Science raise his pensive head,
Blow the fresh bay, bid Industry rejoice,
And the rough sons of lowest Labour smile.
As when, profuse of spring, the loosen'd West
Lifts up the pining year, and balmy breathes
Youth, life, and love, and beauty o'er the world.

But haste we from these melancholy shores,
Nor to deaf winds, and waves, our fruitless plaint
Pour weak ; the country claims our active aid !
That let us roam ; and where we find a spark
Of public virtue, blow it into flame.
Lo ! now my sons, the sons of freedom ! meet
In awful senate : thither let us fly ;

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Burn in the patriot's thought, flow from his tongue
In fearless truth ; myself, transform'd, preside,
And shed the spirit of BRITANNIA round.

This said; her fleeting form and airy train,
Sunk in the gale ; and nought but ragged rocks
Rush'd on the broken eye, and nought was heard
But the rough cadence of the dashing wave.

T O T H E
M E M O R Y
OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE
L O R D T A L B O T.

ADDRESSED TO HIS SON.

W H I L E, with the public, you, my Lord, lament
A friend and father lost; permit the Muse,
The Muse assign'd of old a double theme,
To praise dead worth, and humble living pride,
Whose generous task begins where interest ends,
Permit her on a TALBOT's tomb to lay
This cordial verse sincere, by truth inspir'd,
Which means not to bestow but borrow fame.
Yes, she may sing his matchless virtues now——
Unhappy that she may.——But where begin?
How from the diamond single out each ray,
Where all, tho' trembling with ten thousand hues,
Effuse one dazzling undivided light?

Let the low-minded of these narrow days
No more presume to deem the lofty tale
Of ancient times, in pity to their own,
Romance. In TALBOT we united saw

The piercing eye, the quick-enlighten'd soul,
The graceful ease, the flowing tongue of Greece,
Join'd to the virtues and the force of Rome.

Eternal wisdom, that all-quick'ning sun,
Whence every life, in just proportion, draws
Directing light and actuating flame,
Ne'er with a larger portion of its beams
Awaken'd mortal clay. Hence, steady, calm,
Diffusive, deep and clear, his reason saw,
With instantaneous view, the truth of things;
Chief what to human life and human bliss
Pertains, that noblest science fit for man :
And hence, responsive to his knowledge, glow'd
His ardent virtue. Ignorance and vice,
In consort, bid agree; each heightening each;
While virtue draws from knowledge brighter fire.

What grand, what comely, or what tender sense,
What talent, or what virtue was not his;
What that can render man or great, or good,
Give useful worth, or amiable grace?
Nor could he brook in studious shade to lye,
In soft retirement, indolently pleas'd
With selfish peace. The Syren of the wise
(Who steals th' Aonian song, and, in the shape
Of virtue, woos them from a worthless world,)
Tho' deep he felt her charms, could nevet melt
His strenuous spirit, recollected, calm,
As silent night, yet active as the day.
The more the bold, the bustling, and the bad,
Press to usurp the reins of power, the more

Behoves it virtue, with indignant zeal,
 To check their combination. Shall low views
 Of sneaking interest or luxurious vice,
 The villain's passions, quicken more to toil,
 And dart a livelier vigour through the soul,
 Than those that, mingled with our truest good,
 With present honour and immortal fame,
 Involve the good of all? an empty form
 Is the weak virtue, that amid the shade
 Lamenting lyes, with future schemes amus'd,
 While Wickedness and Folly, *kindred powers*,
 Confound the world. A TALBOT's, different far,
 Sprung ardent into action: action, that disdain'd
 To lose in deathlike sloth one pulse of life,
 That might be sav'd; disdain'd for coward ease,
 And her insipid pleasures, to resign
 The prize of glory, the keen sweets of toil,
 And those high joys that teach the truly great
 To live for others, and for others die.

Early, behold! he breaks benign on life.
 Not breathing more beneficence, the spring
 Leads in her swelling train the gentle airs.
 While gay, behind her, smiles the kindling waste
 Of ruffian storms, and winter's lawless rage.
 In him Astrea, to this dim abode
 Of ever-wandering men, return'd again:
 To bless them *his* delight, to bring them back,
 From thorny error, from unjoyous wrong,
 Into the paths of kind *primaeval* faith,
 Of happiness and justice. All his parts,

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His virtues all, collected, fought the good
Of human kind. For *that* he, fervent, felt
The throb of patriots, when they model states:
Anxious for *that*, nor needful sleep could hold
His still awaken'd soul; nor friends had charms
To steal, with pleasing guile, one peaceful hour;
Toil knew no languor, no attraction joy.
Thus with unwearied steps, by virtue led,
He gain'd the summit of that sacred hill,
Where rais'd above black envy's dark'ning clouds,
Her spotless temple lifts its radiant front.
Be nam'd, victorious ravagers, no more!
Vanish, ye human comets! shrink your blaze!
Ye that your glory to your terrors owe,
As, o'er the gazing desolated earth,
You scatter famine, pestilence and war;
Vanish! before this vernal sun of fame;
Effulgent sweetness, beaming life and joy.

How the heart listen'd while he, pleading, spoke!
While on the enlighten'd mind, with winning art,
His gentle reason so persuasive stole,
That the charm'd hearer thought it was his own.
Ah! when, ye studious of the laws, again
Shall such enchanting lessons bless your ear?
When shall again the darkest truths, perplex,
Be set in ample day? when shall the harsh
And arduous open into smiling ease?
The solid mix with elegant delight?
His was the talent with the purest light
At once to pour conviction on the soul,

And warm with lawful flame th' impassion'd heart.
 That dangerous gift with him was safely lodg'd
 By Heaven— He sacred to his country's cause,
 To trampled want and worth, to suffering right,
 To the lone widow's and her orphan's woes,
 Reserv'd the mighty charm. With equal brow,
 Despising then the smiles or frowns of power,
 He all that noblest eloquence effus'd,
 Which generous passion, taught by reason, breathes:
 Then spoke the man; and, o'er barren art,
 Prevail'd abundant nature. Freedom then
 His client was, humanity and truth.

Plac'd on the seat of justice, there he reign'd,
 In a superior sphere of cloudless day,
 A pure intelligence. No tumult there,
 No dark emotion, no intemp'rate heat,
 No passion e'er disturb'd the clear serene
 That round him spread. A zeal for right alone,
 The love of justice, like the steady sun,
 Its equal ardor lent; and sometimes, rais'd
 Against the sons of violence, of pride,
 And bold deceit, his indignation gleam'd,
 Yet still by sober dignity restrain'd.
 As intuition quick, he snatch'd the truth,
 Yet with progressive patience, step by step,
 Self-diffident, or to the slower kind,
 He thro' the maze of falsehood trac'd it on,
 Till, at the last evolv'd, it full appear'd,
 And even the loser own'd the just decree.

But when in senates, he, to Freedom firm,

Enlighten'd Freedom, plann'd salubrious laws,
 His various learning, his wide knowledge, then,
 His insight deep into BRITANNIA'S weal,
 Spontaneous seem'd from simple sense to flow,
 And the plain patriot smooth'd the brow of law.
 No specious swell, no frothy pomp of words
 Fell on the cheated ear; no study'd maze
 Of declamation, to perplex the right,
 He darkening threw around: safe in itself,
 In its own force, all-powerful Reason spoke;
 While on the great, the ruling point, at once,
 He stream'd decisive day, and shew'd it vain
 To lengthen farther out the clear debate.
 Conviction breathes conviction: to the heart,
 Pour'd ardent forth, in eloquence unbid,
 The heart attends: for let the *Venerable* try
 Their every hardening stupifying art,
 Truth must prevail, zeal will enkindle zeal,
 And Nature, skilful touch'd, is honest still.

Behold him in the councils of his prince.
 What faithful light he lends? how rare in courts,
 Such wisdom! such abilities! and join'd
 To virtue so determin'd, public zeal,
 And honour of such adamantine proof,
 As even corruption, hopeles, and o'er-aw'd,
 Durst not have tempted! Yet of manners mild,
 And winning every heart, he knew to please,
 Nobly to please; while equally he scorn'd
 Or adulation to receive, or give.
 Happy the state, where wakes a ruling eye

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Of such inspection keen, and general care!
 Beneath a guard so vigilant, so pure,
 Toil may resign his careless head to rest,
 And ever-jealous Freedom sleep in peace.
 Ah! lost untimely! lost in downward days!
 And many a patriot counsel with him lost!
 Counsels, that might have humbled Britain's foe,
 Her native foe, from eldest time by fate
 Appointed, as did once a TALBOT's arms.

Let learning, arts, let universal worth,
 Lament a patron lost, a friend and judge.
 Unlike the sons of vanity, that veil'd
 Beneath the patron's prostituted name,
 Dare sacrifice a worthy man to pride,
 And flush confusion o'er an honest cheek.
 When he conferr'd a grace, it seem'd a debt
 Which he to merit, to the public paid,
 And to the great all-bounteous Source of good.
 His sympathizing heart itself receiv'd
 The generous obligation he bestow'd.
 This, this indeed, is patronizing worth.
 Their kind protector him the Muses own,
 But scorn with noble pride the boasted aid
 Of tasteless vanity's insulting hand.
 The gracious stream, that cheers the letter'd world,
 Is not the noisy gift of summer's noon,
 Whose sudden current, from the naked root
 Washes the little soil which yet remain'd,
 And only more dejects the blushing flowers:
 No, 'tis the soft descending dews at eve,

The silent treasures of the vernal year,
 Indulging deep their stores, the still night long;
 Till, with returning morn, the freshen'd world
 Is fragrance all, all beauty, joy and song.

Still let me view him in the pleasing light
 Of private life, where pomp forgets to glare,
 And where the plain-unguarded soul is seen.
 There with that truest greatness he appear'd,
 Which thinks not of appearing; kindly veil'd
 In the soft graces of the friendly scene,
 Inspiring social confidence and ease.
 As free the converse of the wise and good,
 As joyous, disentangling every power,
 And breathing mixt improvement with delight,
 As when amid the various-blossom'd spring,
 Or gentle-beaming autumn's pensive shade,
 The philosophic mind with nature talks.
 Say ye, his Sons, his dear remains, with whom
 The father laid superfluous state aside,
 Yet rais'd your filial duty thence the more,
 With friendship rais'd it, with esteem, with love,
 Beyond the ties of blood, oh! speak the joy,
 The pure serena, the chearful wisdom mild,
 The virtuous spirit, which his vacant hours,
 In semblance of amusement, thro' the breast
 Infus'd. And thou, O * Rundle! lend thy strain,
 Thou daring friend! thou brother of his soul!
 In whom the head and heart their stores unite:

* Dr. Rundle late Bishop of Derry in Ireland.

Whatever fancy paints, invention pours,
 Judgment digests, the well-tun'd bosom feels,
 Truth natural, moral, or divine, has taught,
 The Virtues dictate, or the Muses sing.
 Lend me the plaint, which, to the lonely main,
 With memory conversing, you will pour,
 As on the pebbled shore, pensive, stray,
 Where Derry's mountains a bleak crescent form,
 And mid their ample round receive the waves,
 That from the frozen pole resounding, rush
 Impetuous. Tho' from native sun-shine driven,
 Driven from your friends, the sun-shine of the soul,
 By slanderous zeal, and politics infirm,
 Jealous of worth; yet will you bless your lot,
 Yet will you triumph in your glorious fate,
 Whence Talbot's friendship glows to future times,
 Intrepid, warm; of kindred tempers born;
 Nurs'd, by experience, into slow esteem,
 Calm confidence unbounded, love not blind,
 And the sweet light from mingled minds disclos'd,
 From mingled chymic oils as bursts the fire.

I too remember well that chearful bowl,
 Which round his table flow'd. The serious there
 Mix'd with the sportive, the learn'd with the plain;
 Mirth soften'd wisdom, candor temper'd mirth;
 And wit its honey lent, without the sting.
 Not simple Nature's unaffected sons,
 The blameless Indians, round their forest-cheer,
 In sunny lawn or shady covert set,
 Hold more unspotted converse; nor of old,

Rome's awful consuls, her dictator-swains,
As on the product of their Sabine farms
They fared, with stricter virtue fed the soul :
Nor yet in Athens, at an Attic meal,
Where Socrates presided, fairer truth,
More elegant humanity, more grace,
Wit more refin'd or deeper science reign'd.

But far beyond the little vulgar bounds
Of family, or friends, or native land,
By just degrees, and with proportion'd flame,
Extended his benevolence : a friend
To human-kind, to parent Nature's works.
Of free access, and of engaging grace,
Such as a brother to a brother owes,
He kept an open judging ear for all,
And spread an open countenance, where smiled
The fair effulgence of an open heart ;
While on the rich, the poor, the high, the low,
With equal ray, his ready goodness shone :
For nothing human foreign was to him.

Thus to a dread inheritance, my Lord,
And hard to be supported, you succeed :
But, kept by virtue, as by virtue gain'd,
It will thro' latest time enrich your race,
When grosser wealth shall moulder into dust,
And with their authors in oblivion sunk
Vain titles ly, the servile badges oft
Of mean submission, not the meed of worth.
True genuine honour its large patent holds
Of all mankind, thro' every land and age,

Of universal reason's various sons,
 And even of God himself, sole perfect Judge!
 Yet know these noblest honours of the mind
 On rigid terms descend: the high-plac'd heir,
 Scan'd by the public eye, that, with keen gaze,
 Malignant seeks out faults, cannot thro' life,
 Amid the nameless insects of a court,
 Unheeded steal: but with his fire compar'd,
 He must be glorious, or he must be scorn'd.
 This truth to you, who merit well to bear
 A name to Britons dear, th' officious Muse
 May safely sing, and sing without reserve.

Vain were the plaint, and ignorant the tear
 That should a TALBOT mourn. Ourselves, indeed,
 Our Country robb'd of her delight and strength,
 We may lament. Yet let us, grateful, joy
 That we such virtues knew, such virtues felt,
 And feel them still, teaching our views to rise
 Thro' ever-bright'ning scenes of future worlds.
 Be dumb, ye worst of zealots! ye that, prone
 To thoughtless dust, renounce that generous hope,
 Whence every joy below its spirit draws,
 And every pain its balm: a TALBOT's light,
 A TALBOT's virtues claim another source,
 Than the blind maze of undesigning blood:
 Nor when that vital fountain plays no more,
 Can they be quench'd amid the gelid stream.

Methinks I see his mounting spirit, freed
 From tangling earth, regain the realms of day,
 Its native country, whence, to bless mankind,

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Eternal goodness, on this darksome spot,
Had ray'd it down a while. Behold! approv'd
By the tremendous Judge of heaven and earth,
And to th' Almighty Father's presence join'd,
He takes his rank, in glory, and in bliss,
Amid the human worthies. Glad around
Croud his compatriot shades, and point him out,
With joyful pride, Britannia's blameless boast.
Ah! who is he, that with a sonder eye
Meets thine enraptur'd?—'Tis the best of sons!
The best of friends!—Too soon is realized
That hope, which once forbade thy tears to flow!
Meanwhile the kindred souls of every land,
(Howe'er divided in the fretful days
Of prejudice and error) mingled now
In one selected never-jarring state,
Where GOD himself their only monarch reigns,
Partake the joy; yet such the sense that still
Remains of earthly woes, for us below,
And for our loss, they drop a pitying tear.
But cease, presumptuous Muse, nor vainly strive
To quit this cloudy sphere that binds thee down:
'Tis not for mortal hand to trace these scenes,
Scenes that our gross ideas groveling cast
Behind, and strike our boldest language dumb.

Forgive, immortal shade! if aught from earth,
From dust low-warbled, to those groves can rise,
Where flows celestial harmony, forgive
This fond superfluous verse. With deep-felt voice,
On ev'ry heart impress'd, thy deeds themselves

Attest thy praise. Thy praise the widows sighs,
And orphans tears embalm. The good, the bad,
The sons of justice and the sons of strife,
All who or freedom or who interest prize,
A deep-divided nation's parties all,
Conspire to swell thy spotless praise to heaven.
Glad heaven receives it, and seraphic lyres
With songs of triumph thy arrival hail.
How vain this tribute then! this lowly lay!
Yet nought is vain which gratitude inspires.
The Muse, besides, her duty thus approves
To virtue, to her country, to mankind,
To ruling Nature, that, in glorious charge,
As to her priestess, gives it her, to hymn
Whatever good and excellent she forms.

I

THE
CASTLE
OF
INDOLENCE.
AN
ALLEGORICAL POEM.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS poem being writ in the manner of Spenser, the obsolete words, and a simplicity of diction in some of the lines, which borders on the ludicrous, were necessary to make the imitation more perfect. And the stile of that admirable poet, as well as the measure in which he wrote, are, as it were, appropriated by Custom to all allegorical poems writ in our language; just as in the French the stile of Marot, who lived under Francis I. has been used in tales, and familiar epistles, by the politest writers of the age of Louis XIV.

EXPLANATION of the Obsolete Words used in this Poem.

ARCHIMAGE, *The chief, or greatest of magicians
or enchanters.*

Apaid, *paid.*

Appall, *affright.*

Atween, *between.*

Ay, *always.*

Bale, *sorrow, trouble, misfortune.*

Benempt, *named.*

Blazon, *painting, displaying.*

Breme, *cold, raw.*

Carol, *to sing songs of joy.*

Caurus, *the north-west wind.*

Certes, *certainly.*

Dan, *a word prefixed to names.*

Deftly, *skilfully.*

Depainted, *painted.*

Drowsy-head, *drowsiness.*

Eath, *easy.*

Eftsoons, *immediately, often, afterwards.*

Eke, *also.*

Fays, *fairies.*

Gear or Geer, furniture, equipage, drefs.

Glaive, sword. (Fr.)

Glee, joy, pleasure.

Han, have.

Hight, named, called; and sometimes it is used for
is called. See Stanza vii.

Idlefs, Idlenefs.

Imp, Child, or offspring; from the Saxon impan, to
graft or plant.

Kest, for cast.

Lad, for led.

Lea, a piece of land, or meadow.

Libbard, leopard.

Lig, to ly.

Lofel, a loose idle fellow.

Louting, bowing, bending.

Lithe, loose, lax.

Mell, mingle.

Moe, more.

Moil, to labour.

Mote, might.

Muchel or Mochel, much, great.

Nathlefs, nevertheless.

Nc, nor.

Needments, *necessaries*.

Nourling, *a child that is nursed*.

Noyance, *barm*.

Prankt, *coloured, adorned gaily*.

Perdie, (*Fr. par Dieu*) *an old oath*.

Prick'd thro' the forest, *rode thro' the forest*.

Scar, *dry, burnt up*.

Sheen, *bright, shining*.

Sicker, *sure, surely*.

Soot, *sweet, or sweetly*.

Sooth, *true, or truth*.

Stound, *misfortune, pang*.

Sweltry, *sultry, consuming with heat*.

Swink, *to labour*.

Smackt, *favoured*.

Thrall, *slave*.

Transmew'd, *transform'd*.

Vild, *vile*.

Unkempt, (*Lat. incomptus*) *unadorn'd*.

Ween, *to think, be of opinion*.

Weet, *to know; to weet, to wit*.

Whilom, *ere-while, formerly*.

Wight, *man*.

Wis for Wist, *to know, think, understand*.

Wonne, (*a noun*) *dwelling*.

Wroke, *wreakt.*

N. B. The letter Y is frequently placed in the beginning of a word by Spenser, to lengthen it a syllable, and *en* at the end of a word, for the same reason, as *withouten*, *casten*, &c.

Yborn, *born.*

Yblent or blent, *blended, mingled.*

Yclad, *clad.*

Ycleped, *called, named.*

Yfere, *together.*

Ymolten, *melted.*

Yode (*preter tense of yede*) *went.*

T H E
C A S T L E
O F
I N D O L E N C E.

The castle-hight of Indolence,
And its false luxury;
Where for a little time, alas!
We liv'd right jollily.

I.

O MORTAL man, who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate;
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an antient date;
And, certes, there is for it reason great;
For, tho' sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late;
Withouten that would come an heavier bale,
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

II.

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hiil encompass'd round,
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is no where found.

It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground;
 And there a season atween June and May,
 Half pranked with spring, with summer half im-
 brown'd,

A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,
 No living wight could work, ne cared even for play.

III.

Was nought around but images of rest:
 Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between;
 And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest,
 From poppies breath'd; and beds of pleasant green,
 Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
 Meantime unnumber'd glittering streamlets play'd,
 And hurled every where their waters sheen;
 That as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,
 Tho' restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

IV.

Join'd to the prattle of the purling rills,
 Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
 And flocks loud-bleating from the distant hills,
 And vacant shepherds piping in the dale:
 And now and then sweet Philomel would wail,
 Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
 That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale;
 And still a coil the grasshopper did keep:
 Yet all these sounds yblent inclined all to sleep.

V.

Full in the passage of the vale above,
 A sable, silent, solemn forest stood;
 Where nought but shadowy forms was seen to move,

As Idle's fancy'd in her dreaming mood :
And up the hills on either side a wood,
Of blackening pines ay waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood ;
And where this valley winded out below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard,
to flow.

VI.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was :
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky :
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instill a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures always hover'd nigh ;
But whate'er smack'd of noyance, or unrest,
Was far far off expell'd from this delicious nest.

VII.

The landscape such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where INDOLENCE (for so the wizard hight)
Close hid his castle mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of chequer'd day and night :
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate,
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was plac'd ; and to his lute, of cruel fate,
And labour harsh, complain'd, lamenting man's estate.

VIII.

Thither continual pilgrims crouded still,
From all the roads of earth that pass there by :

For, as they chanc'd to breath on neighb'ring hill,
 The freshness of this valley smote their eye,
 And drew them ever and anon more nigh;
 Till clustering round th' enchanter false they hung,
 Ymolten with his syren melody;
 While o'er th' enfeebling lute his hand he flung,
 And to the trembling chords those tempting verses

IX.

[sung :

" Behold! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold!
 " See all but man with unearn'd pleasure gay :
 " See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
 " Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of May !
 " What youthful bride can equal her array ?
 " Who can with her for easy pleasure vie !
 " From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
 " From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly,
 " Is all she hath to do beneath the radiant sky.

X.

" Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
 " The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
 " Ten thousand throats ! that from the flowering
 " thorn,
 " Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love,
 " Such grateful kindly raptures them emove :
 " They neither plow, nor sow; ne, fit for flail,
 " E'er to the barn the nodding sheaves they drove;
 " Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale,
 " Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale.

XI.

" Outcast of nature, man! the wretched thrall
 " Of bitter-dropping sweat, of sweltry pain,

" Of cares that eat away thy heart with gall,
 " And of the vices, an inhuman train,
 " That all proceed from savage thirst of gain :
 " For when hard-hearted interest first began
 " To poison earth, Astraea left the plain ;
 " Guile, violence, and murder seiz'd on man,
 " And, for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers
 ran.

XII.

" Come, ye, who still the cumbrous load of life
 " Push hard up hill ; but as the farthest steep
 " You trust to gain, and put an end to strife,
 " Down thunders back the stone with mighty sweep,
 " And hurls your labours to the valley deep,
 " For ever vain ; come, and withouten fee,
 " I in oblivion will your sorrows steep,
 " Your cares, your toils ; will steep you in a sea
 " Of full delight : O come, ye weary wights, to me !

XIII.

" With me you need not rise at early dawn,
 " To pass the joyless day in various stounds ;
 " Or, louting low, on upstart fortune fawn,
 " And sell fair honour for some paltry pounds ;
 " Or through the city take your dirty rounds,
 " To cheat, and dun, and lie, and visit pay,
 " Now flattering base, now giving secret wounds ;
 " Or proul in courts of law for human prey,
 " In venal senate thief, or rob on broad highway.

XIV.

" No cocks with me to rustie labour call,
 " From village on to village sounding clear ;

" To tardy swains no shrill-voic'd matrons squall;
 " No dogs, no babes, no wives, to stun your ear;
 " No hammers thump; no horrid blacksmith fear,
 " Ne noisy tradesmen your sweet slumbers start,
 " With sounds that are a misery to hear:
 " But all is calm, as would delight the heart
 " Of Sybarite of old, all nature, and all art.

XV.

" Here nought but candor reigns, indulgent ease,
 " Good natur'd lounging, fauntring up and down:
 " They who are pleas'd themselves must always
 " please;
 " On other's ways they never squint a frown,
 " Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town.
 " Thus, from the source of tender indolence,
 " With milky blood the heart is overflown,
 " Is sooth'd and sweetn'd by the social sense;
 " For interest, envy, pride, and strife are banish'd
 " hence.

XVI.

" What, what is virtue, but repose of mind,
 " A pure ethereal calm, that knows no storm;
 " Above the reach of wild ambition's wind,
 " Above those passions that this world deform,
 " And torture-man, a proud malignant worm!
 " But here, instead, soft gales of passion play,
 " And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
 " A quicker sense of joy; as breezes stray
 " Across th' enliven'd skies, and make them still
 " more gay.

XVII.

- " The best of men have ever loved repose;
" They hate to mingle in the filthy fray;
" Where the foul sowrs, and gradual rancour grows,
" Imbittered more from peevish day to day.
" Even those whom fame has lent her fairest ray,
" The most renowned of worthy wights of yore,
" From a base world at last have stolen away:
" So SCIPIO, to the soft Cumaeen shore
" Retiring, tasted joy he never knew before.

XVIII.

- " But if a little exercise you chuse,
" Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here.
" Amid the groves you may indulge the muse,
" Or tend the blooms, and deck the vernal year;
" Or softly stealing, with your watry gear,
" Along the brooks, the crimson-spotted fry
" You may delude: the whilst, amus'd, you hear
" Now the hoarse stream, and now the zephir's
" " sigh,
" Attuned to the birds, and woodland melody.

XIX.

- " O grievous folly! to heap up estate,
" Losing the days you see beneath the sun;
" When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting fate,
" And gives th' untasted portion you have won,
" With ruthless toil, and many a wretch undone,
" To those who mock you gone to Pluto's reign,
" There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun;

"But sure it is of vanities most vain,
 "To toil for what you here untoiling may obtain."

XX.

He ceas'd. But still their trembling ears retain'd
 The deep vibrations of his witching song;
 That, by a kind of magic power, constrain'd
 To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng.
 Heaps pour'd on heaps, and yet they slipt along,
 In silent ease; as when beneath the beam
 Of summer-moons, the distant woods among,
 Or by some flood all silver'd with the gleam,
 The soft-embodied fays through airy portal stream:

XXI.

By the smooth demon so it order'd was,
 And here his baneful bounty first began:
 Tho' some there were who would not further pass,
 And his alluring baits suspected han.
 The wise distrust the too fair spoken man.
 Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye:
 Not to move on, forsooth, is all they can;
 For do their very best they cannot fly,
 But often each way look, and often sorely sigh.

XXII.

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw,
 With sudden spring he leapt upon them strait;
 And soon as touch'd by his unhallow'd paw,
 They found themselves within the cursed gate;
 Full hard to be repass'd, like that of fate.
 Not stronger were of old the giant-crew,
 Who fought to pull high Jove from regal state;

Though feeble wretch he seem'd, of fallow hue,
Certes, who bides his grasp, will that encounter rue :

XXIII.

For whomsoe'er the villain takes in hand,
Their joints unknit, their sinews melt apace;
As lithe they grow as any willow-wand,
And of their vanish'd force remains no trace :
So when a maiden fair, of modest grace,
In all her buxom blooming May of charms,
Is seized in some losel's hot embrace,
She waxeth very weakly as she warms,
Then sighing yields her up to love's delicious harms.

XXIV.

Wak'd by the croud, slow from his bench arose
A comely full-spread porter, swol'n with sleep :
His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breath'd repose,
And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep,
Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep;
While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran,
Through which his half-wak'd soul would faintly
peep.

Then taking his black staff, he call'd his man,
And rous'd himself as much as rouse himself he can.

XXV.

The lad leap'd lightly at his master's call.
He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
Save sleep and play who minded nought at all,
Like most the untaught striplings of his age.
This boy he kept each band to disengage,
Garters and buckles, task for him unfit,

But ill-becoming his grave personage,
 And which his portly paunch would not permit,
 So this same limber page to all performed it.

XXVI.

Meantime the master-porter wide display'd
 Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns;
 Wherewith he those who enter'd in, array'd
 Loose, as the breeze that plays along the downs,
 And waves the summer-woods when evening frowns.
 O fair undress, best dress! it checks no vein,
 But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns, [fain,
 And heightens ease with grace. This done, right
 Sir porter sat him down, and turn'd to sleep again.

XXVII.

Thus easy rob'd, they to the fountain sped,
 That in the middle of the court up-threw
 A stream, high spouting from its liquid bed,
 And falling back again in drizzly dew: [drew.
 There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted,
 It was a fountain of Nepenthe rare: [grew,
 Whence, as Dan HOMER sings, huge pleasure
 And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care;
 Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams
 more fair.

XXVIII.

This rite perform'd, all inly pleas'd and still,
 Withouten tromp was proclamation made:
 "Ye sons of INDOLENCE, do what you will;
 "And wander where you list, thro' hall or glade!
 "Be no man's pleasure for another's staid;

“ Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
“ And curs’d be he who minds his neighbour’s
“ trade!

“ Here dwells kind ease and unreprieving joy :
“ He little merits blefs who others can annoy.”

XXIX.

Strait of these endless numbers, swarming round,
As thick as idle motes in sunny ray,
Not one eastsoons in view was to be found,
But every man stroll’d off his own glad way.
Wide o’er this ample court’s blank area,
With all the lodges that thereto pertain’d,
No living creature could be seen to stray ;
While solitude, and perfect silence reign’d :
So that to think you dream’d you almost was con-
strain’d.

XXX.

As when a shepherd of the * Hebrid Isles,
Plac’d far amid the melancholy main,
(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles;
Or that aerial beings sometimes deign
To stand, embodied, to our senses plain)
Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
The whilst in ocean Phoebus dips his wain,
A vast assembly moving to and fro :
Then all at once in air dissolves the wondrous show.

* Those islands on the western coast of Scotland
called the Hebrides.

XXXI.

Ye gods of quiet and of sleep profound!
Whose soft dominion o'er this castle sways,
And all the widly-silent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
What never yet was sung in mortal lays.
But how shall I attempt such arduous string,
I who have spent my nights and nightly days,
In this soul deadening place, loose-loitering?
Ah! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing?

XXXII.

Come on, my muse, nor stoop to low despair,
Thou imp of Jove, touch'd by celestial fire!
Thou yet shalt sing of war, and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of Britain will inspire;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre;
Thou yet shalt tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage,
Dashing corruption down thro' every worthless age.

XXXIII.

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
Ne cursed knocker ply'd by villain's hand,
Self-open'd into halls, where, who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand,
The pride of Turkey and of Persia land?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretch around in seemly band;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head;
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed.

XXXIV.

And every where huge cover'd tables stood,
With wines high flavour'd and rich viands crown'd;
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old ocean genders in his round:
Some hand unseen these silently display'd,
Even undemanded by a sign or sound;
You need but wish, and, instantly obey'd,
Fair rang'd the dishes rose, and thick the glasses
play'd.

XXXV.

Here freedom reign'd, without the least alloy;
Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor faintly spleen durst murmur at our joy,
And with envenom'd tongue our pleasures pall.
For why? there was but one great rule for all;
To wit, that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
And carol what, unbid, the muses might inspire.

XXXVI.

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
Where was enwoven many a gentle tale;
Such as of old the rural poets sung,
Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale:
Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
Pour'd forth at large the sweetly tortur'd heart;
Or, sighing tender passion, swell'd the gale,

And taught charm'd echo to resound their smart;
While flocks, woods, streams, around repose and peace
impart.

XXXVII.

Those pleas'd the most, where, by a cunning hand,
Depainted was the patriarchal age;
What time Don Abraham left the Chaldee land,
And pastur'd on from verdant stage to stage,
Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
Toil was not then. Of nothing took they heed,
But with wild beasts the silvan war to wage,
And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed:
Bless'd sons of Nature they! true golden age indeed!

XXXVIII.

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
Bade the gay bloom of vernal landscapes rise,
Or autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls:
Now the black tempest strikes th' astonish'd eyes;
Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies;
The trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
And now rude mountains frown amid the skies;
Whate'er Lorrain light-touch'd with softening hue,
Or savage Rosa dash'd, or learned Pouffin drew.

XXXIX.

Each found too here to languishment inclin'd,
Lull'd the weak bosom, and induced ease.
Ærial music in the warbling wind,
At distance rising oft, by small degrees,
Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees

It hung, and breath'd such soul-dissolving airs,
As did, alas! with soft perdition please:
Entangled deep in its enchanting snares,
The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

XL.

A certain music, never known before,
Here lull'd the pensive melancholy mind;
Full easily obtain'd. Behoves no more,
But sidelong, to the gently-waving wind,
To lay the well-tun'd instrument reclin'd;
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refin'd,
The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight:
Whence, with just cause,* the Harp of Æolus it hight.

XLI.

Ah me! what hand can touch the strings so fine?
Who up the lofty diapason roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul?
Now rising love they fann'd; now pleasing dole
They breath'd, in tender musings, thro' the heart;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands an hymn impart:
Wild warbling nature all, above the reach of art!

* This is not an imagination of the author; there being in fact such an instrument, called Æolus's Harp, which, when placed against a little rushing or current of air, produces the effect here described.

XLH.

Such the gay splendour the luxurious state,
 Of Caliphs old, who on the Tygris' shore,
 In mighty Bagdat, populous and great,
 Held their bright court, where was of ladies store;
 And verse, love, music still the garland wore :
 When sleep was coy, † the bard, in waiting there,
 Chear'd the lone midnight with the Muse's lore;
 Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
 And music lent new gladness to the morning air.

XLIII.

Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran
 Soft-tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,
 And sobbing breezes sigh'd, and oft began
 (So work'd the wizard) wintry storms to swell,
 As heaven and earth they would together melt :
 At doors and windows, threatening, seem'd to call
 The demons of the tempest, growling fell,
 Yet the least entrance found they none at all;
 Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.

XLIV.

And hither Morpheus sent his kindest dreams,
 Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace;
 O'er which were shadowy cast elysian gleams,
 That play'd, in waving lights, from place to place,

† The Arabian Caliphs had poets among the officers of their court, whose office it was to do what is here mentioned.

And shed a roseate smile on nature's face.
Not Titian's pencil e'er could so array,
So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space;
Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,
As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

XLV.

No, fair illusions! artful phantoms, no!
My Muse will not attempt your fairy-land:
She has no colours that like you can glow;
To catch your vivid scenes too gross her hand.
But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band
Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprights,
Who thus in dreams, voluptuous, soft and bland,
Pour'd all th' Arabian Heaven upon our nights,
And blest'd them oft besides with more refin'd delights.

XLVI.

They were, in sooth, a most enchanting train,
Even feigning virtue; skilful to unite
With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.
But for those fiends, whom blood and broils delight;
Who hurl the wretch, as if to hell outright,
Down down black gulphs, where sullen waters sleep,
Or hold him clambering all the fearful night
On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep;
They, till due time should serve, were bid far hence
to keep.

XLVII.

Ye guardian spirits, to whom man is dear,
From these foul demons shield the midnight gloom:
Angels of fancy and of love, be near,

And o'er the blank of sleep diffuse a bloom :
 Evoke the sacred shades of Greece and Rome,
 And let them virtue with a look impart :
 But chief, a while O ! lend us from the tomb
 Those long-lost friends for whom in love we smart,
 And fill with pious awe and joy-mixt woe the heart.

XLVIII.

Or are you sportive ?—Bid the morn of youth
 Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days
 Of innocence, simplicity, and truth ;
 To cares estrang'd, and manhood's thorny ways.
 What transport, to retrace our boyish plays,
 Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supply'd ;
 The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
 Of the wild brooks !—But, fondly wandering wide,
 My Muse, resume the task that yet doth thee abide.

XLIX.

One great amusement of our household was,
 In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,
 Still as you turn'd it, all things that do pass
 Upon this ant-hill earth ; where constantly
 Of idly-busy men the restless fry
 Run bustling to and fro with foolish haste,
 In search of pleasures vain that from them fly,
 Or which obtain'd the caitiffs dare not taste :
 When nothing is enjoy'd, can there be greater waste ?

L.

Of Vanity the Mirror this was call'd.
 Here you a muckworm of the town might see,
 At his dull desk, amid his legers stall'd,

Eat up with carking care and penurie;
Most like to carcase patch'd on gallow-tree.
"A penny saved is a penny got:"
Firm to this scoundrel-maxim keepeth he,
Ne of its rigour will be bate a jot,
Till it has quench'd his fire, and banished his pot.

LI.

Strait from the filth of this low grub, behold!
Comes fluttering forth a gaudy spendthrift heir,
All glossy gay, enamel'd all with gold,
The silly tenant of the summer air,
In folly lost, of nothing takes he care;
Pimps, lawyers, stewards, harlots, flatterers vile,
And thieving tradesmen him among them share:
His father's ghost from limbo-lake, the while,
Sees this, which more damnation does upon him pile.

LII.

This globe pourtray'd the race of learned men,
Still at their books, and turning the o'er the page
Backwards and forwards: oft they snatch the pen,
As if inspir'd, and in a Thespian rage;
Then write and blot, as would your ruth engage.
Why, Authors, all this scrawl and scribbling fore?
To lose the present, gain the future age,
Praised to be when you can hear no more,
And much enrich'd with fame when useless worldly
store.

LIII.

Then would a splendid city rise to view,
With carts, and cars, and coaches roaring all:

Wide pour'd abroad behold the giddy crew :
 See how they dash along from wall to wall !
 At every door hark, how they thundering call !
 Good Lord ! what can this giddy rout excite ?
 Why on each other with fell tooth to fall ;
 A neighbour's fortune, fame, or peace to blight,
 And make new tiresome parties for the coming night ?

LIV.

The puzzling sons of party next appear'd,
 In dark cabals and nightly juntos met ;
 And now they whisper'd close, now shrugging rear'd
 Th' important shoulder ; then, as if to get
 New light, their twinkling eyes were inward set.
 No sooner Lucifer * recalls affairs,
 Then forth they various rush in mighty fret !
 When lo ! push'd up to power, and crown'd their
 cares,

In comes another set and kicketh them down stairs.

LV.

But what most shew'd the vanity of life,
 Was to behold the nations all on fire,
 In cruel broils engag'd, and deadly strife :
 Most Christian kings, inflam'd by black desire,
 With honourable ruffians in their hire,
 Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour :
 Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
 They sit them down just where they were before,
 Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force
 restore.

* The Morning Star.

LVI.

To number up the thousands dwelling here,
An useless were, and eke an endless task;
From kings, and those who at the helm appear,
To gypsies brown in summer-glades who bask.
Yea many a man, perdie, I could unmask,
Whose desk and table make a solemn show,
With tape-ty'd trash, and suits of fools that ask
For place or pension, laid in decent row;
But these I passen by, with nameless numbers moe.

LVII.

Of all the gentle tenants of the place,
There was a man of special grave remark:
A certain tender gloom o'erspread his face,
Pensive not sad, in thought involv'd not dark.
As foot this man could sing as morning lark,
And teach the noblest morals of the heart;
But these his talents were ybury'd stark;
Of the fine stores he nothing would impart,
Which or boon nature gave, or nature-painting art.

LVIII.

To noon-tide shades incontinent he ran,
Where purls the brook with sleep-inviting sound:
Or when Dan Sol to slope his wheels began,
Amid the broom he bask'd him on the ground,
Where the wild thyme and camomil are found:
There would he linger, till the latest ray
Of light sat trembling on the welkin's bound;
Then homeward thro' the twilight shadows stray,
Sauntering and slow. So had he passed many a day.

LIX.

Yet not in thoughtless slumber were they past :
 For oft the heavenly fire, that lay conceal'd
 Beneath the sleeping embers, mounted fast,
 And all its native light anew reveal'd :
 Oft as he travers'd the coerulean field,
 And mark'd the clouds that drove before the wind,
 Ten thousand glorious systems would he build,
 Ten thousand great ideas fill'd his mind ;
 But with the clouds they fled, and left no trace behind.

LX.

With him was sometimes join'd, in silent walk,
 (Profoundly silent, for they never spoke)
 One shyer still, who quite detested talk :
 Oft, stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
 To groves of pine, and broad o'er-shadowing oak ;
 There, inly thrill'd, he wander'd all alone,
 And on himself his pensive fury wroke,
 Ne ever utter'd word, save when first shone
 The glittering star of eve—" Thank heaven! the
 day is done."

LXI.

Here lurch'd a wretch who had not crept abroad
 For forty years, ne face of mortal seen ;
 In chamber brooding like a loathly toad :
 And sure his linen was not very clean.
 Thro' secret loop-holes, that had practis'd been
 Near to his bed, his dinner vile he took ;
 Unkempt, and rough, of squalid face and mien,

Our castle's shame! whence, from his filthy nook,
We drove the villain out for fitter lair to look.

LXII.

One day there chaunc'd into these halls to rove
A joyous youth, who took you at first sight;
Him the wild wave of pleasure hither drove,
Before the sprightly tempest tossing light:
Certes, he was a most engaging wight,
Of social glee, and wit humane tho' keen,
'Turning the night to day and day to night:
For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
If in this nook of quiet, bells had ever been.

LXIII.

But not even pleasure to excess is good:
What most elates then sinks the soul as low:
When spring-tide joy pours in with copious flood,
The higher still th' exulting billows flow,
The farther back again they flagging go,
And leave us groveling on the dreary shore:
Taught by this son of joy, we found it so;
Who, whilst he staid, kept in a gay uproar
Our madden'd castle all, th' abode of sleep no more.

LXIV.

As when in prime of June a burnish'd fly
Sprung from the meads, o'er which he sweeps along,
Chear'd by the breathing bloom and vital sky,
Tunes up amid these airy halls his song,
Soothing at first the gay reposing throng:
And oft he sips their bowl; or nearly drown'd,
He, thence recovering, drives their beds among,

And scares their tender sleep, with trump profound;
Then out again he flies, to wing his mazy round.

LXV.

Another guest there was, of sense refin'd,
Who felt each worth, for every worth he had;
Serene yet warm, humane yet firm his mind,
As little touch'd as any man's with bad:
Him through their inmost walks the muses lad,
To him the sacred love of nature lent,
And sometimes would he make our valley glad;
Whenas we found he would not here be pent,
To him the better sort this friendly message sent.

LXVI.

"Come, dwell with us! true son of virtue, come!
"But if, alas! we cannot thee persuade,
"To ly content beneath our peaceful dome,
"Ne ever more to quit our quiet glade;
"Yet when at last thy toils but ill apaid
"Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly spark,
"Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,
"There to indulge the muse, and nature mark:
"We then a lodge for thee will rear in HAGLEY
"PARK."

LXVII.

Here whilom ligg'd th' ESOPUS * of the age;
But call'd by fame, in soul ypricked deep,
A noble pride restor'd him to the stage,
And rous'd him like a giant from his sleep.

* Mr. Quin.

Even from his slumbers we advantage reap :
With double force th' enliven'd scene he wakes,
Yet quits not nature's bounds. He knows to keep
Each due decorum : now the heart he shakes,
And now with well-urg'd sense th' enlighten'd judge-
ment takes.

LXVIII.

A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems ;
† Who void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Pour'd forth his unpremeditated strain :
The world forsaking with a calm disdain
Here laugh'd he careless in his easy seat ;
Here quaff'd encircled with the joyous train,
Oft moralizing sage : his ditty sweet
He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat.

LXIX.

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy.
A little, round, fat, oily man of God,
Was one I chiefly mark'd among the fry ;
He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
If a tight damsel chaunc'd to trippen by ;
Which when observ'd, he shrunk into his mew,
And strait would recollect his plety anew.

† The following lines of this stanza were writ by a friend of the author.

LXX.

Nor be forgot a tribe, who minded nought
 (Old inmates of the place) but state affairs :
 They look'd, perdie, as if they deeply thought ;
 And on their brow sat every nation's cares :
 The world by them is parcell'd out in shares,
 When in the Hall of Smoke they congress hold,
 And the sage berry fun-burnt Mocha bears
 Has clear'd their inward eye : then smoke-enroll'd,
 Their oracles break forth mysterious as of old.

LXXI.

Here languid beauty kept her pale-fac'd court :
 Beviés of dainty dames, of high degree,
 From every quarter hither made resort ;
 Where, from gross mortal care and business free,
 They lay, pour'd out in ease and luxury.
 Or should they a vain shew of work assume,
 Alas ! and well-a-day ! what can it be ?
 To knot, to twist, to range the vernal bloom :
 But far is cast the distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom.

LXXII.

Their only labour was to kill the time :
 And labour dire it is, and weary woe.
 They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme ;
 Then rising sudden, to the glass they go,
 Or saunter forth, with tottering step and slow :
 This soon too rude an exercise they find ;
 Strait on the couch their limbs again they throw,
 Where hours on hours they sighing ly reclin'd,
 And court the vapoury god soft-breathing in the wind.

LXXIII.

Now must I mark the villainy we found,
But ah! too late, as shall eftsoons be shewn.
A place here was, deep, dreary, under ground;
Where still our inmates, when unpleasing grown,
Diseas'd and loathsome, privily were thrown,
Far from the light of heaven, they languish'd there
Unpity'd uttering many a bitter groan;
For of those wretches taken was no care:
Fierce fiends, and hags of hell, their only nurses were.

LXXIV.

Alas! the change! from scenes of joy and rest,
To this dark den, where sickness tofs'd alway.
Here Lethargy, with deadly sleep oppress,
Stretch'd on his back, a mighty lubbard, lay,
Heaving his sides, and snored night and day;
To stir him from his trance it was not eath,
And his half-open'd eyne he shut straitway:
He led, I wot, the softest way to death,
And taught withouten pain and strife to yield the
breath.

LXXV.

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsy:
Unwieldy man; with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply;
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And moping here did Hypochondria sit,
Mother of spleen, in robes of various dye,

Who vexed was full oft with ugly fit;
And some her frantic deem'd, and some her deem'd
a wit.

LXXVI.

A lady proud she was, of antient blood,
Yet oft her fear her pride made crouchen low:
She felt, or fancy'd in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spittles know,
And fought all physic which the shops bestow,
And still new leaches and new drugs would try,
Her humour ever wavering to and fro:
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes cry,
Then sudden waxed wroth, and all she knew not why.

LXXVII.

Fast by her side a listless maiden pin'd,
With aching head, and squeamish heart-burnings;
Pale, bloated, cold, she seem'd to hate mankind,
Yet lov'd in secret all forbidden things.
And here the Tertian shakes his chilling wings;
The sleepless Gout here counts the crowing cocks,
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings;
Whilst Apoplexy cramm'd intemperance knocks
Down to the ground at once, as butcher felleth ox.

C A N T O II.

The knight of arts and industry,
And his atchievements fair;
That, by this castle's overthrow,
Secur'd and crowned were.

I.

ESCAP'D the castle of the fire of sin,
Ah! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find?
For all around, without, and all within,
Nothing save what delightful was and kind,
Of goodness favouring and a tender mind,
E'er rose to view. But now another strain,
Of doleful note, alas! remains behind:
I now must sing of pleasure turn'd to pain,
And of the false inchanter INDOLENCE complain.

II.

Is there no patron to protect the muse,
And fence for her Parnassus' barren soil?
To every labour its reward accrues,
And they are sure of bread who sink and moil;
But a fell tribe th'Aonian hive despoil,
As ruthless wasps oft rob the painful bee:
Thus while the laws not guard that noblest toil,
Ne for the muses other meed decree,
They praised are alone, and starve right merrily.

III.

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny :
 You cannot rob me of free nature's grace ;
 You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
 Through which Aurora shews her brightening face ;
 You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
 The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve :
 Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
 And I their toys to the *great Children* leave :
 Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

IV.

Come then, my muse, and raise a bolder song ;
 Come, lig no more upon the bed of sloth,
 Dragging the lazy languid line along,
 Fond to begin, but still to finish loth,
 Thy half-writ scrolls all eaten by the moth :
 Arise, and sing that generous imp of fame,
 Who with the sons of softness nobly wroth,
 To sweep away this human lumber came,
 Or in a chosen few to rouse the slumbering flame.

V.

In Fairy-Land there liv'd a knight of old,
 Of feature stern, Selvagio well yclep'd ;
 A rough unpolish'd man, robust and bold,
 But wond'rous poor : he neither sow'd nor reap'd,
 Ne stores in summer for cold winter heap'd ;
 In hunting all his days away he wore ;
 Now scorch'd by June, now in November steep'd,
 Now pinch'd by biting January fore,
 He still in woods pursu'd the libbard and the boar.

VI.

As he one morning, long before the dawn,
Prick'd thro' the forest to dislodge his prey,
Deep in the winding bosom of a lawn,
With wood wild-fring'd, he mark'd a taper's ray,
That from the beating rain, and wintry fray,
Did to a lonely cot his steps decoy;
There, up to earn the needments of the day,
He found dame Poverty, nor fair nor coy:
Her he compress'd, and fill'd her with a lusty boy.

VII.

Amid the green-wood shade this boy was bred,
And grew at last a knight of muchel fame,
Of active mind and vigorous lustyhed,
THE KNIGHT OF ARTS AND INDUSTRY by name.
Earth was his bed, the boughs his roof did frame;
He knew no beverage but the flowing stream;
His tasteful well-earn'd food the silvan game,
Or the brown fruit with which the wood-lands teem:
The same to him glad summer, or the winter breme.

VIII.

So pass'd his youthly morning, void of care,
Wild as the colts that through the commons run:
For him no tender parents troubled were,
He of the forest seem'd to be the son;
And certes had been utterly undone,
But that Minerva pity of him took,
With all the gods that love the rural wonne,
That teach to tame the soil and rule the crook;
He did the sacred Nine disdain a gentle look.

IX.

Of fertile genius him they nurtur'd well,
 In every science, and in every art,
 By which mankind the thoughtless brutes excel,
 That can or use, or joy, or grace impart,
 Disclosing all the powers of head and heart :
 Ne were the goodly exercises spar'd,
 That brace the nerves, or make the limbs alert,
 And mix elastic force with firmness hard : [par'd.
 Was never knight on ground mote be with him com-

X.

Sometimes, with early morn, he mounted gay
 The hunter-steed, exulting o'er the dale,
 And drew the roseate breath of orient day ;
 Sometimes, retiring to the secret vale,
 Yclad in steel, and bright with burnish'd mail,
 He strain'd the bow, or tofs'd the sounding spear,
 Or darting on the goal outstripp'd the gale,
 Or wheel'd the chariot in its mid-career,
 Or strenuous wrestled hard with many a tough compeer.

XI.

At other times he pry'd through nature's store,
 Whate'er she in th'ethereal round contains,
 Whate'er she hides beneath her verdant floor,
 The vegetable and the mineral reigns ;
 Or else he scann'd the globe, those small domains,
 Where restless mortals such a turmoil keep,
 Its seas, its floods, its mountains, and its plains ;
 But more he search'd the mind, and rous'd from sleep
 Those moral seeds whence we heroic actions reap.

XII.

Nor would he scorn to stoop from high pursuits
Of heavenly truth, and practice what she taught.
Vain is the tree of knowledge without fruits.
Sometimes in hand the spade or plough he caught,
Forth-calling all with which boon earth is fraught;
Sometimes he ply'd the strong mechanic tool,
Or rear'd the fabric from the finest draught;
And oft he put himself to Neptune's school,
Fighting with winds and waves on the vex'd ocean pool.

XIII.

To solace then these rougher toils, he try'd
To touch the kindling canvass into life;
With nature his creating pencil vy'd,
With nature joyous at the mimic strife;
Or, to such shapes as grac'd Pygmalion's wife
He hew'd the marble; or with vary'd fire,
He rous'd the trumpet and the martial fife,
Or bade the lute sweet tenderness inspire,
Or verses fram'd that well might wake Apollo's lyre.

XIV.

Accomplish'd thus he from the woods issu'd,
Full of great aims, and bent on bold emprise;
The work, which long he in his breast had brew'd,
Now to perform he ardent did devise;
To wit, a barbarous world to civilize.
Earth was till then a boundless forest wild;
Nought to be seen but savage wood, and skies;
No cities nourish'd arts, no culture smil'd,
No government, no laws, no gentle manners mild.

XV.

A rugged wight, the worst of brutes, was man :
 On his own wretched kind he ruthless prey'd :
 The strongest still the weakest over-ran ;
 In every country mighty robbers sway'd,
 And guile and ruffian force were all their trade.
 Life was a scene of rapine, want, and woe ;
 Which this brave knight, in noble anger, made
 To swear, he would the rascal rout o'erthrow,
 For, by the powers divine, it should no more be so !

XVI.

It would exceed the purport of my song,
 To say how this *best Sun*, from orient climes
 Came beaming life and beauty all along,
 Before him chasing indolence and crimes.
 Still as he pass'd, the nations he sublimed,
 And calls forth arts and virtues with his ray :
 Then Egypt, Greece, and Rome, their golden times,
 Successive, had ; but now in ruins grey
 They ly, to slavish sloth and tyranny a prey.

XVII.

To crown his toils, Sir INDUSTRY then spread
 The swelling sail, and made for Britain's coast.
 A sylvan life till then the natives led,
 In the brown shades and green-wood forest lost,
 All careless rambling where it lik'd them most :
 Their wealth the wild-deer bounding thro' the glade ;
 They lodg'd at large, and liv'd at nature's cost ;
 Save spear and bow, withouten other aid ;
 Yet not the Roman steel their naked breast dismay'd.

XVIII.

He lik'd the soil, he lik'd the clement skies,
He lik'd the verdant hills and flowery plains.
Be this my great, my chosen isle (he cries);
This, whilst my labours LIBERTY sustains,
This queen of ocean all assault disdains.
Nor lik'd he less the genius of the land,
To freedom apt and persevering pains;
Mild to obey, and generous to command,
Temper'd by forming heaven with kindest firmest hand.

XIX.

Here, by degrees, his master-work arose,
Whatever arts and industry can frame;
Whatever finish'd agriculture knows,
Fair queen of arts! from heaven itself who came,
When Eden flourish'd in unspotted fame:
And still with her sweet innocence we find,
And tender peace, and joys without a name,
That, while they ravish, tranquilize the mind:
Nature and art at once, delight and use combin'd.

XX.

Then towns he quicken'd by mechanic arts,
And bade the fervent city glow with toil;
Bade social commerce raise renowned marts,
Join land to land, and marry soil to soil,
Unite the poles, and without bloody spoil
Bring home of either Ind the gorgeous stores;
Or, should despotic rage the world embroil,
Bade tyrants tremble on remotest shores,
While o'er th'encircling deep Britannia's thunder roars.

XXI.

'The drooping muses then he westward call'd,
 From the fam'd city * by Prepontic sea;
 What time the Turk th'enfeebled Grecian thrall'd;
 Thence from their cloister'd walks he set them free,
 And brought them to another Castalie,
 Where Isis many a famous nourishing breeds;
 Or where old Cam soft paces o'er the lee
 In pensive mood, and tunes his Doric reeds,
 The whilst his flocks at large the lonely shepherd feeds.

XXII.

Yet the fine arts were what he finish'd least.
 For why? they are the quintessence of all,
 The growth of labouring time, and slow encrease;
 Unless, as seldom chances, it should fall,
 That mighty patrons the coy sisters call
 Up to the sun-shine of uncumber'd ease,
 Where no rude care the mounting thought may
 thrall,
 And where they nothing have to do but please:
 Ah! gracious God! thou knowest they ask no other
 fees.

XXIII.

But now, alas! we live too late in time:
 Our patrons now even grudge that little claim,
 Except to such as seek the soothing rhyme;
 And yet, forsooth, they wear MARCENAS' name,
 Poor sons of puffed-up vanity, not fame.

* Constantinople.

Unbroken spirits chear! still, still remains
Th' Eternal Patron, LIBERTY; whose flame,
While she protects, inspires the noblest strains.
The best, and sweetest far, are toil-created gains.

XXIV.

When as the knight had fram'd, in BRITAIN-
LAND,

A matchless form of glorious government,
In which the sovereign laws alone command,
Laws 'stablish'd by the public free consent,
Whose majesty is to the sceptre lent;
When this great plan, with each dependent art,
Was settled firm, and to his heart's content,
Then sought he from the toilsome scene to part,
And let life's vacant eve breathe quiet through the
heart.

XXV.

For this he chose a farm in Deva's vale,
Where his long alleys peep'd upon the main.
In this calm seat he drew the healthful gale,
Here mix'd the chief, the patriot, and the swain.
The happy monarch of his sylvan train,
Here, sided by the guardians of the fold,
He walk'd his rounds, and chear'd his blest domain:
His days, the days of unstain'd nature, roll'd,
Replete with peace and joy, like patriots of old.

XXVI.

Witness, ye lowing herds, who gave him milk;
Witness, ye flocks, whose woolly vestments far
Exceed soft India's cotton, or her silk;

Witness, with Autumn charg'd, the nodding ear,
That homeward came beneath sweet evening's star,
Or of Sempster moons the radiance mild.

O hide thy head, abominable war!

Of crimes and ruffian idleness the child!

From Heaven this life ysprung, from Hell thy glories
vild!

XXVII.

Nor from his deep retirement banish'd was
Th' amusing care of rural industry.

Still, as with grateful change the seasons pass,
New scenes arise, new landscapes strike the eye,
And all th' enliven'd country beautify:

Gay plains extend where marshes slept before;
O'er recent meads th' exulting streamlets fly;

Dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres' store,
And woods imbrown the steep, or wave along the
shore.

XXVIII.

As nearer to his farm you made approach,
He polish'd nature with a finer hand:

Yet on her beauties durst not art encroach;

'Tis art's alone these beauties to expand.

In graceful dance immingled, o'er the land,
Pan, Pales, Flora, and Pomona play'd:

Here too brisk gales the rude wild common fann'd,
An happy place: where free, and unafraid,

Amid the flowering brakes each coyer creature stray'd.

XXIX.

But in prime vigor what can last for ay?

That soul-ensfeebling wizzard INDOLENCE,
 I whilom sung, wrought in his works decay :
 Spread far and wide for his curs'd influence ;
 Of public virtue much he dull'd the sense,
 Even much of private ; eat our spirit out,
 And fed our rank luxurious vices ; whence
 The land was overlaid with many a lout ;
 Not, as old fame reports, wise, generous, bold, and
 stout.

XXX.

A rage of pleasure madden'd every breast,
 Down to the lowest lees the ferment ran :
 To his licentious wish each must be blest'd,
 With joy be fever'd ; snatch it as he can.
 Thus Vice the standard rear'd ; her arrier-ban
 Corruption call'd, and loud she gave the word,
 " Mind, mind yourselves ! - why should the vulgar
 " man,

" The lacquey be more virtuous than his lord ?

" Enjoy this span of life ! 'tis all the gods afford."

XXXI.

The tidings reach'd, to where in quiet hall,
 The good old knight enjoy'd well-earn'd repose.

" Come, come Sir Knight ! thy children on thee
 call ;

" Come, save us yet, ere ruin round us close ;

" The demon INDOLENCE thy toil o'erthrows."

On this the noble colour stain'd his cheeks,
 Indignant, glowing through the whitening snows
 Of venerable eld ; his eye full speaks

His ardent soul, and from his couch at once he breaks.

XXXII.

I will, (he cried), so help me, God! destroy
That villain Archimage.——His page then strait
He to him call'd, a fiery-footed boy,
Benempt Dispatch. " My steed be at the gate;
" My bard attend; quick, bring the net of Fate."
This net was twisted by the sisters three;
Which when once cast o'er harden'd wretch, too
late

Repentance comes: replevy cannot be
From the strong iron grasp of vengeful destiny.

XXXIII.

He came, the bard, a little druid wight,
Of wither'd aspect; but his eye was keen,
With sweetness mix'd. In russet brown bedight,
As is his sister in the copses green*,
He crept along, unpromising of mien.
Gross he who judges so. His soul was fair,
Bright as the children of yon azure sheen.
True comeliness, which nothing can impair,
Dwells in the mind: all else is vanity and glare.

XXXIV.

Come, (quoth the Knight), a voice has reach'd
mine ear:
The demon INDOLENCE threatens overthrow
To all that to mankind is good and dear:
Come, PHILOMELUS; let us instant go,

* The Nightingale.

O'erturn his bowers, and lay his castle low.

Those men, those wretched men, who will be slaves,
Must drink a bitter wrathful cup of woe :

But some there be, thy song, as from their graves,
Shall raise. Thrice happy he! who without rigor
lives.

XXXV.

Issuing forth, the Knight bestrode his steed,
Of ardent bay, and on whose front a star
Shone blazing bright : sprung from the generous
breed

That whirl of active day the rapid car,
He pranc'd along, disdain'g gate or bar.
Mean-time, the bard on milk-white palfrey rode ;
An honest sober beast, that did not mar
His meditations, but full softly trode :

And much they moraliz'd as thus yfere they yode.

XXXVI.

They talk'd of virtue, and of human bliss;
What else so fit for man to settle well ?

And still their long researches met in this,

This truth of truths, which nothing can refel :

“ From virtue's fount the purest joys out-well,

“ Sweet rills of thought that chear the conscions
“ soul ;

“ While vice pours forth the troubled streams of
“ hell,

“ The which, howe'er disguis'd, at last with dole

“ Will through the tortur'd breast their fiery torrent
roll.”

XXXVII.

At length it dawn'd, that fatal valley gay,
O'er which high wood-crown'd hills their summits
rear.

On the cool height a while our palmers stay,
And spite even of themselves their senses chear;
Then to the vizard's wonne their steps they steer.
Like a green isle, it broad beneath them spread,
With gardens round, and wandering currents clear,
And tufted groves to shed the meadow-bed,
Sweet airs and song : and without hurry all seem'd
glad.

" As God shall judge me, Knight, we must forgive,
(The half-enraptur'd PHILOMELUS cry'd),

" The frail good man deluded here to live,

" And in these groves his musing fancy hide.

" Ah! nought is pure. It cannot be deny'd,

" That virtue still some tincture has of vice,

" And vice of virtue. What should then betide,

" But that our charity be not too nice?

" Come, let us those we can to real bliss entice.

XXXIX.

" Ay, sicker, (quoth the Knight), all flesh is frail,

" To pleasant sin and joyous dalliance bent;

" But let not brutish vice of this avail,

" And think to scape deserved punishment.

" Justice were cruel weakly to relent;

" From Mercy's self she got her sacred glaive;

" Grace be to those who can, and will repent;

" But penance long, and dreary, to the slave,

"Who must in floods of fire his gross foul spirit lave."

XL.

Thus, holding high discourse, they came to where
The cursed carle was at his wonted trade;
Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said.
But when he saw, in goodly geer array'd,
The grave majestic knight approaching nigh,
And by his side the bard so sage and staid,
His count'nance fell; yet oft his anxious eye
Mark'd them, like wily fox who roosted cock doth spy.

XLI.

Nathless, with feign'd respect, he bade give back
The rabble-rout, and welcom'd them full kind;
Struck with the noble twain, they were not slack
His orders to obey, and fall behind.
Then he resum'd his song; and unconfin'd,
Pour'd all his music, ran through all his strings:
With magic dust their eyne he tries to blind,
And virtue's tender airs o'er nature flings.
What pity bafe his song who so divinely sings!

XLII.

Elate in thought, he counted them his own,
They listen'd so intent with fix'd delight:
But they instead, as if transmew'd to stone,
Marvel'd he could with such sweet art unite
The lights and shades of manners, wrong and right.
Mean-time, the silly croud the charm devour,
Wide pressing to the gate. Swift on the knight
He darted fierce, to drag him to his bower,

Who backning shun'd his touch, for well he knew its
power.

XLIII.

As in throng amphitheatre of old,
The wary Retiarius * trapp'd his foe;
Even so the knight, returning on him bold,
At once involv'd him in the net of woe,
Whereof I mention made not long ago.
Enrag'd at first, he scorn'd so weak a jail,
And leap'd, and flew, and flounced to and fro;
But when he found that nothing could avail,
He sat him felly down, and knew'd his bitter nail.

XLIV.

Alarm'd, the inferior demons of the place
Rais'd rueful shrieks and hideous yells around;
Black stormy clouds deform'd the welkin's face,
And from beneath was heard a wailing sound,
As of infernal sprites in cavern bound;
A solemn sadness every creature strook,
And lightning's flash'd, and horror rock'd the
ground; [look,
Huge crouds on crouds out-pour'd, with blemish'd
As if on time's last verge this frame of things had
shook.

XLV.

Soon as the short-liv'd tempest was yspent,
Steam'd from the jaws of vext Avernus' hole,

* A Gladiator, who made use of a net, which he
threw over his adversary.

And hush'd the hubbub of the rabblement,
Sir INDUSTRY the first calm moment stole.

" There must, (he cry'd), amid so vast a shoal,

" Be some who are not tainted at the heart,

" Not poison'd quite by this same villain's bowl :

" Come then, my bard, thy heavenly fire impart :

" Touch soul with soul, till forth the latent spirit start."

XLVI.

The bard obey'd ; and taking from his side,

Where it in seemly sort depending hung,

His British harp, its speaking strings he try'd,

The which*with skilful touch he deffly strung,

Till tinkling in clear symphony they rung.

Then, as he felt the Muses come along,

Light o'er the cords his raptur'd hand he flung,

And play'd a prelude to his rising song :

The whilst, like midnight mute, ten thousands round
him throng.

XLVII.

Thus, ardent, burst his strain.—

" Ye hapless race,

" Dire-labouring here to smother reason's ray,

" That lights our Maker's image in our face,

" And gives us wide o'er rearth unquestion'd sway ;

" What is th' ador'd *supreme perfection*, say ?

" What, but eternal never-resting soul,

" Almighty power, and all-directing day ;

" By whom each atom stirs, the planets roll ;

" Who fills, surrounds, informs, and agitates the
whole.

XLVIII.

" Come, to the beaming God your hearts unfold!
 " Draw from its fountain life! 'Tis thence alone,
 " We can excel. Up from unfeeling mold,
 " To seraphs burning round th' Almighty's throne,
 " Life rising still on life, in higher tone,
 " Perfection forms, and with perfection blefs.
 " In universal nature this clear shewn,
 " Not needeth proof: to prove it were, I wis,
 " To prove the beauteous world excells the brute
 abyss.

XLIX.

" Is not the field, with lively culture green,
 " A joyous sight more than the green morass?
 " Do not the skies, with active ether clean,
 " And fann'd by sprightly Zephyrs, far surpass
 " The foul November-fogs, and slumbrous mass,
 " With which sad Nature veils her drooping face?
 " Does not the mountain-stream, as clear as glass,
 " Gay dancing on, the putrid pool disgrace?
 " The same in all holds true, but chief in human race.

L.

" It was not by vile loitering in ease,
 " That Greece obtain'd the brighter palm of art,
 " That soft yet ardent Athens learn'd to please,
 " To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart,
 " In all supreme! compleat in every part!
 " It was not thence majestic Rome arose,
 " And o'er the nations shook her conquering darts

- “ For sluggard’s brow the laurel never grows;
 “ Renown is not the child of indolent repose.

LI.

- “ Had unambitious mortals minded nought,
 “ But in loose joy their time to wear away;
 “ Had they alone the lap of dalliance sought,
 “ Pleas’d on her pillow their dull heads to lay;
 “ Rude nature’s state had been our state to-day;
 “ No cities e’er their towery fronts had rais’d,
 “ No arts had made us opulent and gay;
 “ With brother-brutes the human race had graz’d;
 “ None e’er had soar’d to fame, none honour’d been,
 none prais’d.

LII.

- “ Great Homer’s song had never fir’d the breast
 “ To thirst of glory, and heroic deeds;
 “ Sweet Maro’s muse, sunk in inglorious rest,
 “ Had silent slept amid the Mincian reeds:
 “ The wits of modern time had told their beads,
 “ And monkish legends been their only strains:
 “ Our Milton’s Eden had lain wrapt in weeds,
 “ Our Shakespeare stroll’d and laugh’d with War-
 wick swains, [plains.
 “ Ne had my master Spenser charm’d his Mulla’s

LIII.

- “ Dumb too had been the sage historic muse,
 “ And perish’d all the sons of antient fame;
 “ Those starry lights of virtue, that diffuse
 “ Through the dark depth of time their vivid flame,
 “ Had all been lost with such as have no name.

- " Who then had scorn'd his ease for others' good?
 " Who then had toil'd rapacious men to tame?
 " Who in the public breach devoted stood,
 " And for his country's cause been prodigal of blood?

LIV.

- " But should to fame your hearts unfeeling be,
 " If right I read, you pleasure all require :
 " Then hear how best may be obtain'd this fee,
 " How best enjoy'd this nature's wide desire.
 " Toil, and be glad ! let industry inspire
 " Into your quicken'd limbs her buoyant breath !
 " Who does not act is dead : absorpt entire
 " In miry sloth, no pride no joy he hath ;
 " O leaden-hearted men, to be in love with death.

LV.

- " Ah ! what avail the largest gifts of Heaven,
 " When drooping health and spirits go amiss ?
 " How tasteless then whatever can be given ?
 " Health is the vital principle of bliss,
 " And exercise of health. In proof of this,
 " Behold the wretch, who slugs his life away,
 " Soon swallow'd in disease's sad abyfs ;
 " While he whom toil has brac'd, or manly play,
 " Has light as air each limb, each thought as clear as
 day.

LVI.

- " O who can speak the vigorous joys of health !
 " Unclogg'd the body, unobscur'd the mind :
 " The morning rises gay ; with pleasing stealth,
 " The temperate evening falls serene and kind.

- " In health the wiser brutes true gladness find.
" See! how the younglings frisk along the meads,
" As May comes on, and wakes the balmy wind;
" Rampant with life, their joy all joy exceeds:
" Yet what but high-strung health this dancining pleasure breeds?

LVII.

- " But here, instead, is foster'd every ill,
" Which or distemper'd minds or bodies know.
" Come then, my kindred spirits! do not spill
" Your talents here. This place is but a shew,
" Whose charms delude you to the den of woe:
" Come follow me, I will direct you right,
" Where pleasure's roses, void of serpents grow,
" Sincere as sweet; come, follow this good knight,
" And you will bless the day that brought him to your fight.

LVIII.

- " Some he will lead to courts, and some to camps;
" To senates some, and public stage debates,
" Where, by the solemn gleam of midnight lamps,
" The world is pois'd, and manag'd mighty states;
" To high-discovery some, that new-creates
" The face of earth; some to the thriving mart;
" Some to the rural reign, and softer fates;
" To the sweet muses some, who raise the heart:
" All glory shall be yours, all nature and all art.

LIX.

- " There are, I see, who listen to my lay,
" Who wretched sigh for virtue, but despair.

- " All may be done, methinks I hear them say),
 " Even death despis'd by generous actions fair;
 " All, but for those who to these bowers repair,
 " Their every power dissolv'd in luxury,
 " To quit of torpid sluggishness the lair,
 " And from the powerful arms of sloth get free,
 " 'Tis rising from the dead—Alas!—It cannot be!

LX.

- " Would you then learn to dissipate the band
 " Of these huge threatening difficulties dire,
 " That in the weak man's way like lions stand,
 " His soul appall, and damp his rising fire?
 " Resolve, resolve, and to be men aspire.
 " Exert that noblest privilege, alone,
 " Here to mankind indulg'd: controul desire:
 " Let godlike reason, from her sovereign throne,
 " Speak the commanding word—*I will!*—and it is
 done.

LXI.

- " Heavens! can you then thus waste, in shameful
 wife,
 " Your few important days of trial here?
 " Heirs of eternity! yborn to rise
 " Through endless states of being, still more near
 " To bliss approaching, and perfection clear,
 " Can you renounce a fortune so sublime,
 " Such glorious hopes, your backward steps to steer,
 " And roll, with vilest brutes, through mud and
 slime?
 " No! no!—Your heaven-touch'd hearts disdain the
 " "fodid crime!"

LXII.

" Enough! enough!" they cry'd—strait, from the
The better sort on wings of transport fly. [croud,
As when amid the lifeless summits proud
Of Alpine cliffs, where to the gelid sky
Snows pil'd on snows in wintry torpor ly,
The rays divine of vernal Phoebus play;
Th' awaken'd heaps, in streamlets from on high,
Rous'd into action, lively leap away, [gay.
Glad-warbling through the vales, in their new Being

LXIII.

Not less the life, the vivid joy serene,
That lighted up these new-created men,
Than that which wings th' exulting spirit clean,
When, just deliver'd from this fleshly den,
It soaring seeks its native skies agen.
How light its essence! how unclogg'd its powers,
Beyond the blazon of my mortal pen!
Even so we glad forsook these sinful bowers,
Even such enraptur'd life, such energy was ours.

LXIV.

But far the greater part, with rage inflam'd,
Dire-mutter'd curses, and blasphem'd high Jove.
" Ye sons of hate! (they bitterly exclaim'd),
" What brought you to this seat of peace and love?
" While with kind nature, here amid the grove,
" We pass'd the harmless sabbath of our time,
" What to disturb it could, fell men, emove
" Your barbarous hearts? Is happiness a crime?
" Then do the fiends of hell rule in yon heaven sublime.

LXV.

“Ye impious wretches, (quoth the knight in wrath),
 “Your happiness behold!”—Then strait a wand
 He wav’d, an anti-magic power that hath,
 Truth from illusive falsehood to command.
 Sudden, the landscape sinks on every hand;
 The pure quick streams are marshy puddles found;
 On baleful heaths the groves all blacken’d stand;
 And o’er the weedy foul abhorred ground, [around.
 Snakes, adders, toads, each loathsome creature crawls

LXVI.

And here and there, on trees by lightning scath’d,
 Unhappy wights who loathed life yhung:
 Or, in fresh gore and recent murder bath’d,
 They weltring lay; or else, infuriate stung
 Into the gloomy flood, while ravens sung
 The funeral dirge, they down the torrent rowl’d:
 These, by distemper’d blood to madness stung,
 Had doom’d themselves; whence oft, when night
 controul’d

The world, returning hither their sad spirits howl’d.

LXVII.

Mean-time a moving scene was open laid;
 That lazar-house, I whilom in my lay
 Depeinted have, its horrors deep display’d,
 And gave unnumber’d wretches to the day,
 Who tossing there in squalid misery lay.
 Soon as of sacred light th’ unwonted smile
 Pour’d on these living catacombs its ray,

Through the drear caverns stretching many a mile,
The sick up-rais'd their heads, and drop'd their woes
a while.

LXVIII.

" O heaven! (they cry'd), and do we once more see
" Yon blessed sun, and this green earth so fair?
" Are we from noisome damps of pest-house free?
" And drink our souls the sweet ethereal air?
" O thou! or Knight, or god! who holdest there
" That fiend, oh keep him in eternal chains!
" But what for us, the children of despair,
" Brought to the brink of hell, what hope remains?
" Repentance does itself but aggravate our pains."

LXIX.

The gentle Knight, who saw their rueful case,
Let fall adown his silver beard some tears.
" Certes (quoth he) it is not even in grace
" T'undo the past, and eke your broken years:
" Nathless, to nobler worlds Repentance rears,
" With humble hope, her eye; to her is given
" A power the truly contrite heart that cheers;
" She quells the brand by which the rocks are
" riven;
" She more than merely softens, she rejoices Heaven.

LXX.

" Then patient bear the sufferings you have earn'd,
" And by these sufferings purify the mind;
" Let wisdom be by past misconduct learn'd;
" Or pious die, with penitence resign'd;
" And to a life more happy and refin'd,

- “ Doubt not, you shall, new creatures, yet arise.
 “ Till then, you may expect in me to find
 “ One who will wipe your sorrow from your eyes,
 “ One who will soothe your pangs, and wing you to
 the skies.”

LXXI.

- They silent heard, and pour'd their thanks in tears.
 “ For you (resum'd the Knight with sterner tone)
 “ Whose hard dry hearts th' obdurate demon scars,
 “ That villain's gifts will cost you many a groan;
 “ In dolorous mansion long you must bemoan
 “ His fatal charms, and weep your stains away;
 “ Till, soft and pure as infant goodness grown,
 “ You feel a perfect change: then, who can say,
 “ What grace may yet shine forth in heaven's eternal
 day?”

LXXII.

- This said, his powerful wand he wav'd anew;
 Instant, a glorious angel-train descends,
 The Charities, to wit, of rosy-hue;
 Sweet love their looks a gentle radiance lends,
 And with seraphic flame compassion blends.
 At once, delighted, to their charge they fly:
 When, lo! a goodly hospital ascends;
 In which they bade each lenient aid be nigh,
 That could the sick-bed smoothe of that sad company.

LXXIII.

- It was a worthy edifying sight,
 And gives to human-kind peculiar grace,

To see kind hands attending day and night,
With tender ministry, from place to place.
Some prop the head; some, from the palid face
Wipe off the faint cold dews weak nature sheds;
Some reach the healing draught: the whilst, to chase
The fear supreme around their soften'd beds,
Some holy man by prayer all opening heaven dispreeds.

LXXIV.

Attended by a glad acclaiming train,
Of those he rescu'd had from gaping hell,
Then turn'd the Knight; and, to his hall again
Soft-pacing, sought of Peace the mossy cell:
Yet down his cheeks the gems of pity fell,
To see the helpless wretches that remain'd,
There left through delves and desarts dire to yell;
Amaz'd, their looks with pale dismay were stain'd,
And spreading wide their hands they meek repentance
feign'd.

LXXV.

But, ah! their scorned day of grace was past:
For (horrible to tell!) a desert wild
Before them stretch'd, bare, comfortless, and vast;
With gibbets, bones, and carcases defil'd.
There nor trim field, nor lively culture smil'd;
Nor waving shade was seen, nor fountain fair;
But sands abrupt on sands lay looſely pil'd, [care,
Thro' which they floundering toil'd with painful
Whilst Phoebus smote them sore, and fir'd the cloud-
less air.

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 less air.

LXXVI.

Then, varying to a joyless land of bogs,
 The sadden'd country a grey waste appear'd;
 Where nought but putrid streams and noisom fogs
 For ever hung on drizzly Auster's beard;
 Or else the ground by piercing Caurus scar'd,
 Was jagged with frost, or heap'd with glazed snow:
 Thro' these extremes a ceaseless round they steer'd,
 By cruel fiends still hurry'd to and fro, [moe.
 Gaunt *Beggary*, and *Scorn*, with many hell-hounds

LXXVII.

The first was with base dunghill rags yclad,
 Tainting the gale, in which they flutter'd light;
 Of morbid hue his features, sunk and sad:
 His hollow eyes shook forth a sickly light;
 And o'er his lank jaw-bone, in piteous plight,
 His black rough beard was matted rank and vile;
 Direful to see! an heart-appalling sight!
 Mean-time foul scurf and blotches him defile;
 And dogs, where-e'er he went, still barked all the
 while.

LXXVIII.

The other was a fell despightful fiend:
 Hell holds none worse in baleful bower below:
 By pride, and wit, and rage, and rancor keen'd;
 Of Man alike, if good or bad, the foe:
 With nose up-turn'd, he always made a shew
 As if he smelt some nauseous scent; his eye
 Was cold, and keen, like blast from boreal snow;

And taunts he casten forth most bitterly.

Such were the twain that off drove this ungodly fry.

LXXIX.

Even so through Brentford town, a town of mud,
An herd of bristly swine is prick'd along;
The filthy beasts, that never chew the cud,
Still grunt, and squeak, and sing their troublous song,
And oft they plunge themselves the mire among:
But ay the ruthless driver goads them on,
And ay of barking dogs the bitter throng
Makes them renew their unmelodious moan;
Ne ever find they rest from their unresting sone.

EV

P O E M S

O N

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

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V E R S E S

OCCASIONED BY THE

DEATH OF MR. AIKMAN,

A particular Friend of the Author's.

AS those we love decay, we die in part,
String after string is sever'd from the heart :
Till loosen'd life, at last, but breathing clay,
Without one pang is glad to fall away.
Unhappy he, who latest feels the blow,
Whose eyes have wept o'er every friend laid low,
Dragg'd ling'ring on from partial death to death,
Till, dying, all he can resign is breath.

O D E.

TELL me, thou soul of her I love,
Ah! tell me, whither art thou fled;
To what delightful world above,
Appointed for the happy dead?

II.

Or dost thou, free, at pleasure, roam,
And sometimes share thy lover's woe;
Where, void of thee, his cheerless home
Can now, alas! no comfort know?

III.

Oh! if thou hover'st round my walk,
While, under every well-known tree,
I to thy fancy'd shadow talk,
And every tear is full of thee;

IV.

Should then the weary eye of grief,
Beside some sympathetic stream,
In slumber find a short relief,
Oh visit thou my soothing dream!

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M I S S S T A N L E Y.

HERE, STANLEY, rest, escap'd this mortal strife,
Above the joys, beyond the woes of life.
Fierce pangs no more thy lively beauties stain,
And sternly try thee with a year of pain :
No more sweet patience, feigning oft relief,
Lights thy sick eye, to cheat a parent's grief :
With tender art, to save her anxious groan,
No more thy bosom presses down its own.
Now well-earn'd peace is thine, and bliss sincere :
Ours be the lenient, not unpleasing tear !

O born to bloom, then sink beneath the storm ;
To show us Virtue in her fairest form ;
To show us artless Reason's moral reign,
What boastful science arrogates in vain ;
Th'obedient passions knowing each their part ;
Calm light the head, and harmony the heart !

Yes, we must follow soon, will glad obey,
When a few suns have roll'd their cares away,
Tir'd with vain life, will close the willing eye :
'Tis the great birth-right of mankind *to die*.
Blest be the bark ! that wafts us to the shore,
Where death-divided friends shall part no more :
To join thee there, here with thy dust repose,
Is all the hope thy hapless mother knows.

TO THE REVEREND
M R. M U R D O C H,
RECTOR OF STRADDISHALL IN
SUFFOLK, 1738.

THUS safely low, my friend, thou canst not fall:
Here reigns a deep tranquillity o'er all;
No noise, no care, no vanity, no strife;
Men, woods and fields, all breathe untroubled life.
Then keep each passion down, however dear;
Trust me, the tender are the most severe.
Guard, while 'tis thine, thy philosophic ease,
And ask no joy but that of virtuous peace;
That bids defiance to the storms of fate:
High bliss is only for a higher state.

A
P A R A P H R A S E
O N T H E
L A T T E R P A R T
O F T H E

SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST. MATTHEW.

WHEN my breast labours with oppressive care,
And o'er my cheek descends the falling tear;
While all my warring passions are at strife,
Oh, let me listen to the words of life!
Raptures deep-felt his doctrine did impart,
And thus he rais'd from earth the drooping heart.

Think not, when all your scanty stores afford,
Is spread at once upon the sparing board;
Think not, when worn the homely robe appears,
While, on the roof, the howling tempest bears;
What farther shall this feeble life sustain,
And what shall clothe these shivering limbs again.
Say, does not life its nourishment exceed?
And the fair body its investing weed?

Behold! and look away your low despair—
See the light tenants of the barren air:
To them, nor stores, nor granaries, belong,
Nought, but the woodland, and the pleasing song:

Yet your kind Heavenly Father bends his eye
On the least wing, that flits along the sky.
To him they sing, when spring renews the plain,
To him they cry, in winter's pinching reign;
Nor is their music, nor their plaint in vain :
He hears the gay, and the distressful call :
And with unsparing bounty fills them all.

Observe the rising lilly's snowy grace,
Observe the various vegetable race;
They neither toil, nor spin, but careless grow,
Yet see how warm they blush! how bright they glow!
What regal vestments can with them compare!
What king so shining! or what queen so fair!

If, ceaseless, thus the fowls of heaven he feeds,
If o'er the fields such lucid robes he spreads;
Will he not care for you, ye faithless, say?
Is he unwise? or, are ye less than they?

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S O N G.

I.

ONE day the God of fond desire,
On mischief bent, to Damon said,
Why not disclose your tender fire,
Not own it to the lovely maid?

II.

The shepherd mark'd his treacherous art,
And softly sighing, thus reply'd:
'Tis true, you have subdu'd my heart,
But shall not triumph o'er my pride.

III.

The slave, in private only bears
Your bondage, who his love conceals;
But when his passion he declares,
You drag him at your chariot-wheels.

S O N G.

HARD is the fate of him who loves,
Yet dares not tell his trembling pain,
But to the sympathetic groves,
But to the lonely listening plain!

Oh! when she blesses next your shade,
Oh! when her footsteps next are seen
In flowery tracts along the mead,
In fresher mazes o'er the green;

Ye gentle spirits of the vale,
To whom the tears of love are dear,
From dying lillies waft a gale,
And sigh my sorrows in her ear.

O! tell her, what she cannot blame,
Tho' fear my tongue must ever bind,
Oh tell her that my virtuous flame
Is as her spotless soul refin'd.

Not her own guardian angel eyes
With chaster tenderness his care,
Nor purer her own wishes rise,
Not holier her own sighs in prayer.

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SEVERAL OCCAS - I

But if, at first, her virgin fear
Should start at love's suspected name,
With that of friendship soothe her ear:
True love and friendship are the same.

K

S O N G.

I.

UNLESS with my Amanda blest,
In vain I twine the woodbine bower;
Unless to deck her sweeter breast,
In vain I rear the breathing flower :

II.

Awaken'd by the genial year,
In vain the birds around me sing;
In vain the fresh'ning fields appear :
" Without my love there is no spring."

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S O N G.

FOR ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove
An unrelenting foe to love;
And when we meet a mutual heart,
Come in between, and bid us part :

Bid us sigh on from day to day,
And wish, and wish the soul away;
Till youth and genial years are flown,
And all the life of life is gone ?

But busy busy still art thou,
To bind the loveless joyless vow,
The heart from pleasure to delude,
To join the gentle to the rude.

For once, O Fortune, hear my prayer,
And I absolve thy future care ;
All other blessings I resign,
Make but the dear Amanda mine.

S O N G.

C O M E, gentle God of soft desire,
Come and possess my happy breast,
Not fury-like in flames and fire,
Or frantic folly's wildness drest;

But come in friendship's angel-guise :
Yet dearer thou than friendship art,
More tender spirit in thy eyes,
More sweet emotions at the heart.

O come with goodness in thy train;
With peace and pleasure void of storm ;
And wouldst thou me for ever gain,
Put on Amanda's winning form.

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O D E.

O NIGHTINGALE, best poet of the grove,
That plaintive strain can ne'er belong to thee,
Blest in the full possession of thy love;
O lend that strain, sweet Nightingale, to me!

'Tis mine, alas! to mourn my wretched fate:
I love a maid who all my bosom charms,
Yet lose my days without this lovely mate;
Inhuman fortune keeps her from my arms.

You, happy birds! by nature's simple laws
Lead your soft lives, sustain'd by nature's fare;
You dwell wherever roving fancy draws,
And love and song is all your pleasing care:

But we, vain slaves of interest and of pride,
Dare not be blest lest envious tongues should blame:
And hence, in vain, I languish for my bride;
O mourn with me, sweet bird, my hapless flame.

T O

S E R A P H I N A.

O D E.

THE wanton's charms, however bright,
Are like the false illusive light,
Whose flattering unuspicious blaze
To precipices oft betrays :
But that sweet ray your beauties dart,
Which clears the mind and clears the heart,
Is like the sacred Queen of night,
Who pours a lovely gentle light
Wide o'er the dark, by wanderers blest,
Conducting them to peace and rest.

A vicious love depraves the mind,
'Tis anguish, guilt, and folly join'd ;
But Seraphina's eyes dispense
A mild and gracious influence ;
Such as in visions angels shed
Around the heaven-illumin'd head.
To love thee, Seraphina, sure,
Is to be tender, happy, pure :
'Tis from low passions to escape,
And woo bright virtue's fairest shape ;
'Tis extasy with wisdom join'd ;
And heaven infus'd into the mind.

O D E

O N

ÆOLUS'S HARP.

I.

AETHEREAL race, inhabitants of air,
 Who hymn your God amid the secret grove,
 Ye unseen beings, to my harp repair,
 And raise majestic strains, or melt in love.

II.

Those tender notes, how kindly they upbraid,
 With what soft woe they thrill the lover's heart;
 Sure from the hand of some unhappy maid,
 Who dy'd of love, these sweet complainings part.

III.

But hark! that strain was of a graver tone:
 On the deep strings his hand some hermit throws;
 Or he the sacred Bard †, who sat alone,
 In the drear waste, and wept his people's woes,

* Æolus's Harp is a musical instrument, which plays with the wind, invented by Mr. Oswald; its properties are fully described in the Castle of Indolence.

† Jeremiah.

IV.

Such was the song which Zion's children sung,
When by Euphrates' stream they made their plaint:
And to such sadly solemn notes are strung
Angelic harps, to soothe a dying saint.

V.

Methinks I hear the full celestial choir,
Thro' heavens high dome their awful anthem raise:
Now chanting clear, and now they all conspire
To swell the lofty hymn, from praise to praise.

VI.

Let me, ye wand'ring spirits of the wind,
Who, as wild fancy prompts you, touch the string,
Smit with your theme, be in your chorus join'd,
For till you cease my Muse forgets to sing.

H Y M N

O N

S O L I T U D E.

HAIL, mildly-pleasing Solitude,
Companion of the wise and good :
But from whose holy piercing eye,
The herd of fools and villains fly.

Oh ! how I love with thee to walk,
And listen to thy whisper'd talk,
Which innocence and truth imparts,
And melts the most obdurate hearts.

A thousand shapes you wear with ease,
And still in every shape you please.

Now wrapt in some mysterious dream,
A lone philosopher you seem ;
Now quick from hill to vale you fly,
And now you sweep the vaulted sky.

A shepherd next you haunt the plain,
And warble forth your oaten strain.

A lover now, with all the grace
Of that sweet passion in your face :
Then, calm'd to friendship, you assume
The gentle-looking HARTFORD's bloom,
As, with her MUSIDORA, she
(Her MUSIDORA fond of thee)

Amid the long withdrawing vale,
Awakes the rival'd nightingale.

Thine is the balmy breath of morn,
Just as the dew-bent rose is born ;
And while meridian fervors beat,
Thine is the woodland dumb retreat ;
But chief, when evening scenes decay,
And the faint landscape swims away,
Thine is the doubtful soft decline,
And that best hour of musing thine.

Descending angels bless thy train,
The Virtues of the sage, and swain ;
Plain Innocence, in white array'd,
Before thee lifts her fearless head :
Religion's beams around thee shine,
And cheer thy glooms with light divine :
About thee sports sweet Liberty ;
And rapt Urania sings to thee.

Oh, let me pierce thy secret cell !
And in thy deep recesses dwell.
Perhaps from Norwood's oak-clad hill,
When Meditation has her fill,
I just may cast my careless eyes
Where London's spiry turrets rise ;
Think of its crimes, its cares, its pain,
Then shield me in the woods again.

A L F R E D :

A

M A S Q U E.

Represented before their Royal Highnesses the PRINCE and PRINCESS of Wales, at Clifden, on the first of August, 1740.

B Y

MR. THOMSON AND MR. MALLET.

Si velimus cum *priorum temporum* necessitate certare, vincemur. Ingeniosior est enim ad *excogitandum* simulatio, veritate; servitus, libertate; metus, amore.

PLIN. Pan. TRAJAN.

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PLIN. Pan. TRAJAN.

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THE ARGUMENT.

AFTER the Danes had made themselves masters of Chippenham, the strongest city in the kingdom of Wessex; Alfred was at once abandoned by all his subjects. In this universal defection, that monarch found himself obliged to retire into the little isle of Athelney in Somersetshire; a place then rough with woods, and of difficult access. There, in the habit of a peasant, he lived unknown, for some time, in a shepherd's cottage. He is supposed to be found in this retreat by the Earl of Devon; whose castle, upon the river Tau, was then besieged by the Danes.

The Persons represented.

ALFRED,
ELTRUDA,
HERMIT,
EARL of Devon,
CORIN, a Shepherd,
EMMA, his wife,

Mr. Milward.
Mrs. Horton.
Mr. Quin.
Mr. Mills.
Mr. Salway.
Mrs. Clive.



A Bard, Soldiers, Spirits.

The SCENE represents a plain, surrounded with woods. On one side, a cottage : on the other, flocks and herds in distant prospect. A hermit's cave in full view, overhung with trees, wild and grotesque.

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A C T I. S C E N E I.

CORIN, EMMA.

EMMA.

SHEPHERD, 'tis he. Beneath yon aged oak,
All on the flowery turf he lays him down.

Cor. Soft : let us not disturb him. Gentle Emma,
Poor though he be, unfriended and unknown,
My pity waits with reverence on his fortune.
Modest of carriage, and of speech most gracious,
As if some faint or angel, in disguise,
Had grac'd our lowly cottage with his presence,
He steals, I know not how, into the heart,
And makes it pant to serve him. Trust me, Emma,
He is no common man.

Em. Some lord, perhaps,
Or valiant chief, that from our deadly foe,
The haughty, cruel, unbelieving Dane,
Seeks shelter here.

Cor. And shelter he shall find.

Who loves his country, is my friend and brother.
Behold him well. Fair virtue in his aspect,
Even thro' the homely russet that conceals him,
Shines forth, and proves him noble. Seest thou, Emma,
Yon western clouds? The sun they strive to hide,
Yet darts his beams around.

Em. Your thought is mine,
He is not what his present fortunes speak him.
But ah! the raging foe is all around us:
We dare not keep him here.

Cor. Content thee, wife:
This island is of strength. Nature's own hand
Hath planted round a deep defence of woods,
The sounding ash, the mighty oak; each tree
A sheltering grove: and choak'd up all between
With wild encumbrance of perplexing thorns,
And horrid brakes. Beyond this woody verge,
Two rivers broad and rapid hem us in,
Along their channel spreads the gulfy pool,
And trembling quagmire, whose deceitful green
Betrays the foot it tempts. One path alone
Winds to this plain, so roughly difficult,
This single arm, poor shepherd as I am,
Could well dispute it with twice twenty Danes.

Em. Yet think, my Corin, on the stern decree
Of that proud foe; "Who harbours or relieves
"An English captain, dies the death of traitors:
"But who their haunts discovers, shall be safe,
"And high rewarded."

Cor. Now, just Heaven forbid,

A British man should ever count for gain
What villainy must earn. No : are we poor ?
Be honesty our riches. Are we mean,
And humbly born ? The true heart makes us noble.
These hands can toil, can sow the ground and reap
For thee and thy sweet babes. Our daily labour
Is daily wealth : it finds us bread and raiment.
Could Danish gold give more ? And for the death
These tyrants threaten, let me rather meet it,
Than e'er betray my guest.——

Em. Alas the while,
That loyal faith is fled from hall and bower,
To dwell with village-swains !

Cor. Ah look ! behold !
Where, like some goodly tree by wintry winds
Torn from the roots and withering, our sad guest
Lyes on the ground diffused.

Em. I weep to see it.

Cor. Thou hast a heart sweet pity loves to dwell in.
Dry up thy tears, and lean on this just hope ;
If yet to do away his country's shame,
To serve her bravely on some blest occasion,
If for these ends this stranger sought our cottage,
The heavenly hosts are hovering here unseen,
To watch and to protect him.—But oh ! when—
My heart burns for it—shall I see the hour
Of vengeance on those Danish Infidels,
That war with Heaven and us ?

Em. Alas, my love !
These passions are not for the poor man's state.

To Heaven and to the rulers of the land
 Leave such ambitious thoughts. Be warn'd, my Corin,
 And think our little all depends on thee.

S O N G.

" O Peace! the fairest child of Heaven,
 " To whom the sylvan reign was given,
 " The vale, the fountain and the grove,
 " With every softer scene of love :
 " Return, sweet Peace! and cheer the weeping swain :
 " Return, with Ease and Pleasure in thy train."

Cor. Hush: cease thy song—For see, our mourn-
 ful guest

Has rais'd his head—and lo! who comes to greet him;
 His friend the woodman of the neighbouring dale,
 Whom late, as yester evening-star arose,
 At his request I found and hither brought.

S C E N E II.

ALFRED, *Earl of Devon.*

Alf. How long, O ever-gracious Heaven! how long
 Shall war thus desolate this prostrate land?
 All, all is lost—And Alfred lives to tell it!
 His cities laid in dust! his subjects slaughter'd,
 Or into slaves debas'd! the murderous foe
 Proud and exulting in the general shame!——

Are these things so! and he without the means
Of great revenge? cast down below the hope
Of succouring those he weeps for? O despair!
O grief of griefs!

Dev. Old as I am, my liege,
In rough war harden'd, and with death familiar,
These eyes have long forgot to melt with softness:
But O, my gracious master, they have seen——
All-pitying Heaven!—such sights of ruthless rage,
Of total desolation——

Alf. O my people!
O ruin'd England!—Devon, those were bless'd,
Who died before this time. Ha! and those robbers,
That violate the sanctity of leagues,
The reverend seal of oaths; that basely broke,
Like nightly ruffians, on the hour of peace,
And stole a victory from men unarm'd,
Those Danes enjoy their crimes! Dread Vengeance! son
Of Power and Justice! come, array'd in terrors,
Thy garment red with blood, thy keen sword drawn:
O come, and on the heads of faithless men
Pour ample retribution; men whose triumph
Upbraids eternal justice.—But no more:
Submission is Heaven's due.—I will not launch
Into that dark abyss where thought must drown.
Proceed, my Lord: on with the mournful tale,
My griefs broke off.

Dev. From yonder heath-crown'd hill,
This island's eastern point, where in one stream
The Thone and Parret roll their blending waves,

I look'd and saw the progress of the foe,
 As of some tempest, some devouring fire,
 That ruins without mercy where it spreads.
 The riches of the year, the golden grain
 That liberal crown'd our plains, lies trampled wide
 By hostile feet, or rooted up; and waste
 Deforms the broad high-way. From space to space,
 Far as my straining eye could shoot its beam,
 Trees, cottages, and castles, smook to heaven
 In one ascending cloud. But oh for pity!
 That way, my Lord, where yonder verdant height
 Declining slides into a fruitful vale,
 Unfightly now and bare; a few poor hinds,
 Grey-hair'd and thinly clad, stood and beheld
 The common ravage: motionless and mute,
 With hands to heaven uprais'd, they stood, and wept—
 My tears attended theirs——

Alf. If this sad sight
 Could pain thee to such anguish, what must I,
 Their king and parent, feel?—It is a torment
 Beyond the strength of patience to endure.
 Why end not I at once this wretched being?
 The means are in my hand.—But shall a prince
 Thus poorly shroud him in the grave from pain,
 And sense of shame? The madman, nay, the coward,
 Has often dar'd the same. A monarch holds
 His life in trust for others. I will live then:
 Let Heaven dispose the rest.

Dev. Thrice-noble Alfred,
 And England's only hope, whose virtues raise

Our frail mortality, our human dust,
Up to angelic splendor and perfection ;
With you to bear the worst of ills, the spoil
Of wasteful war, the loss of life or freedom,
Is happiness, is glory.

Alf. Ah, look round thee :

That mud-built cottage is thy sovereign's palace.
Yon hind, whose daily toil is all his wealth,
Lodges and feeds him. Are these times for flattery,
Or call it praise ? such gaudy attributes
Would misbecome our best and proudest fortunes.
But what are mine ? what is this high-prais'd Alfred !
Among ten thousand wretches most undone.
That prince who sees his country laid in ruins,
His subjects perishing beneath the sword
Of foreign rage, who sees and cannot save them,
Is but supreme in misery !

Dev. My liege,

Who has not known ill fortune, never knew
Himself, or his own virtue. Be of comfort :
We can but die at last. Till that hour comes,
Let noble anger keep our hopes alive.
A sudden thought, as if from Heaven inspir'd,
Darts on my soul. One castle still is ours,
Tho' close begirt and shaken by the Danes.
In this disguise, my chance of passing on,
Of entering there unknown, is promising,
And wears a lucky face. 'Tis our last stake,
And I will play it like a man whose life,
Whose honour hangs upon a single cast.

Meanwhile, my Lord——

Alf. Ha! Devon, thou hast rous'd
My slumbering virtue. I applaud thy thought.
The praise of this brave daring shall be thine;
The danger shall be common. We will both
Strait tempt the Danish camp, and gain this fort:
To animate our brothers of the war,
Those Englishmen who yet deserve that name.
And hear, eternal Justice! if my life
Can make atonement for them, King of kings!
Accept thy willing victim. On my head
Be all their woes: to them be grace and mercy.
Come on, my noble friend.

Dev. Ah, good my liege,
What fits a private valour, and might grace
The simple soldier's courage, would proclaim
His general's rashness. You are England's King:
Your infant children, and your much-lov'd queen;
Nay more, the public weal, ten thousand souls,
Whose hope you are, whose all depends on you,
Forbid this enterprize. 'Tis nobler virtue
To check this ardor, to reserve your sword
For some great day of known and high import;
That to your country, to the judging world
Shall justify all hazards you may run.
This trial suits but me.

Alf. Well, go, my friend;
If thou shalt prosper, thou wilt call me hence
To head my people from their fears recover'd.
May that good angel, who inspir'd thy thought,

Throw round thy steps a vell of cloudy air,
That thou may'st walk invisible and safe.
He's gone—and now without a friend to aid me,
I stand alone, abandon'd to the gloom
Of my sad thoughts—Said I, without a friend?
Oh blasphemous distrust! Have I not Thee,
All-powerful friend and guardian of the righteous,
Have I not Thee to aid me? Let that thought
Support my drooping soul.—But, list. Ha! whence
These air-born notes that sound in measur'd sweetness
Thro' this vast silence?

S C E N E III.

Solemn music is heard at a distance. It comes nearer in a full symphony: after which a single trumpet sounds a high and awakening air. Then the following stanzas are sung by two ærial spirits unseen.

First SPIRIT.

- “ Hear, Alfred, father of the state,
“ Thy Genius Heaven's high will declare!
“ What proves the hero truly great,
“ Is never, never to despair:
“ Is never to despair.

Second SPIRIT.

- “ Thy hope awake, thy heart expand
“ With all its vigour, all its fires.
“ Arise! and save a sinking land!
“ Thy country calls, and Heaven inspires.

Both SPIRITS.

"Earth calls, and Heaven inspires."

S C E N E IV.

ALFRED alone.

All-hail, ye gentle ministers of heaven !
Your song inspires new patience thro' my breast,
And generous hope ; it wings my mourning soul
Above th' entangling mass of earthly passions,
That keep frail man, though struggling to be free,
Still fluttering in the dust.

S C E N E V.

ALFRED, the Hermit advancing from his cave.

Alf. Thrice-happy Hermit !

Whom thus the heavenly habitants attend,
Blessing thy calm retreat ; while ruthless war
Fills the polluted land with blood and crimes.
In this extremity of England's fate,
Led by thy sacred character, I come
For comfort and advice. Thy aged wisdom,
Purg'd from the stormy cloud of human passions,
And by a ray from heaven exalted, sees
Deep through futurity. Say what remains,
What yet remains to save our prostrate country ?

Nor scorn this anxious question even from me,
A nameless stranger.

Her. Alfred, England's king,
All-hail! and welcome to this humble cell.

Alf. Whence dost thou know me, venerable father?

Her. Last night, when, with a draught from that
cool fountain,

I had my wholesome, sober supper crown'd;
As is my stated custom, forth I walk'd,
Beneath the solemn gloom and glittering sky,
To feed my soul with prayer and meditation.
And thus to inward harmony compos'd,
That sweetest music of the grateful heart,
Whose each emotion is a silent hymn,
I to my couch retir'd. Strait on mine eyes
A pleasing slumber fell, whose mystic power
Seal'd up my senses, but enlarg'd my soul.
At once, disclos'd amid the dark waste night,
Appear'd a vision—not the dream of fancy,
But sent from heaven, prophetic and divine.
For know, this ample element contains
Unnumber'd spiritual beings, or malign,
Or good to man. These, when the grosser eye
Of nature sleeps, oft play their several parts,
As on a scene, before th' attentive mind,
And to the favour'd man disclose the future.
Led by these spirits friendly to this isle,
I liv'd thro' future ages; felt the virtue,
The great, the glorious passions that will fire
Distant posterity; when guardian laws

Are by the patriot in the glowing senate
Won from corruption: when th' impatient arm
Of liberty, invincible, shall scourge
The tyrants of mankind—and when the deep,
Thro' all her swelling waves, shall proudly joy
Beneath the boundless empire of thy sons.
I saw thee, Alfred, too—But o'er thy fortunes
Lay clouds impenetrable.

Alf. Ah! good hermit,
That scene is dark indeed! Ye awful powers!
To what am I reserved? Still must I roam
A wanderer here, inglorious and unknown?
Or am I destin'd your great instrument,
From fierce oppression to redeem this land?

Her. Perhaps, the last.—But, prince, remember,
The vows, the noble uses, of affliction. [then,
Preserve the quick humanity it gives,
The pitying, social sense of human weakness:
Yet keep thy stubborn fortitude entire,
The manly heart that to another's woe
Is tender, but superior to its own.
Learn to submit; yet learn to conquer fortune.
Attach thee firmly to the virtuous deeds
And offices of life; to life itself,
With all its vain and transient joys, sit loose.
Chief, let devotion to the sovereign mind,
A steady, chearful, absolute dependence
On his best, wisest government, possess thee.
In thoughtless, gay prosperity, when all
Attends our wish, when nought is seen around us

But kneeling flattery, and obedient fortune;
Then are blind mortals apt, within themselves
To fix their stay, forgetful of the giver.

But when thus humbled, Alfred, as thou art,
When to their feeble natural powers reduc'd,
'Tis then they feel this universal truth——
That heaven is all in all—and man is nothing.

Alf. I thank thee, father, for thy pious counsel.
And witness, thou dread Power! who seest my heart;
That if not to perform my regal task,
To be the common father of my people,
Patron of honour, virtue, and religion;
If not to shelter industry, to guard
Her honest portion from oppressive pride,
From wasteful riot, and the sons of rapine,
Who basely ravish what they dare not earn;
If not to deal out justice like the sun,
With equal light; if not to spread thy bounty,
The treasures trusted to me, not my own,
On all the smiling ranks of nourish'd life;
If not to raise our drooping English name,
To clothe it yet with terror; make this land
Renown'd for peaceful arts to bless mankind,
And generous war to humble proud oppressors:
If not to build on an eternal base,
On liberty and laws, the public weal:
If not for these great ends I am ordain'd,
May I ne'er idly fill the throne of England!

Her. Still may thy breast these sentiments retain,
In prosperous life.

Alf. Prosperity were ruin,
 Could it destroy or change such thoughts as these.
 When Those whom Heaven distinguishes o'er millions,
 Profusely gives them honours, riches, power,
 Whate'er th' expanded heart can wish; when they,
 Accepting the reward, neglect the duty;
 Or worse, pervert those gifts to deeds of ruin:
 Is there a wretch they rule so mean as they?
 Guilty, at once of sacrilege to Heaven,
 And of perfidious robbery to men——
 But hark! methinks I hear a plaintive voice
 Sigh thro' the vale, and wake the mournful echo.

S O N G.

I.

" Sweet valley, say, where pensive lying,
 " For me, our children, England, sighing,
 " The best of mortals leans his head.
 " Ye fountains, dimpled by my sorrow,
 " Ye brooks that my complainings borrow,
 " O lead me to his lonely bed:
 " Or if my lover,
 " Deep woods, you cover,
 " Ah whisper where your shadows o'er him spread!

II.

" 'Tis not the loss of pomp and pleasure,
 " Of empire, or of tinsel treasure,
 " That drops this tear, that swells this groan:
 " No; from a nobler cause proceeding,

“ A heart with love and fondness bleeding,

“ I breathe my sadly-pleasing moan.

“ With other anguish

“ I scorn to languish :

“ For love will feel no sorrows but his own.”

S C E N E VI.

ALFRED, Hermit, ELTRUDA, *advancing.*

Alf. Sure, by the voice and purport of the song,
This generous mourner is my queen Eltruda.
And yet how can that be ?—O all good powers!
’Tis she! ’tis she!

Elt. My lord, my life, my Alfred!
Oh take me to thy arms, with toil o’ercome,
And sudden transport, thus at once to find thee,
In this wild forest, pathless and perplex’d!

Alf. Come to my soul, thou dearest, best of women!
Come, and repose thy sorrows in my bosom.
O all my passions mix in doubtful strife!
If pain or joy prevail, I scarce can say,
While thus I clasp thee, and recal the perils
To which thy trembling steps have been expos’d.
Why hast thou left the convent where I plac’d thee?
Why, unprotected trust thee to a land,
A barbarous land where rages Danish war!
Our hospitable England is no more!

Elt. Dire was the cause, my Alfred. The rous’d
country,

All wild in breathless terror and confusion,
Inform'd us, a near party of the Danes,
Whose brutal fury spares no sex, no age,
No place, however privileged or holy,
Were on full march that way. Instant I fled,
In this disguise, with only these attendants:
But in our way oft chear'd by airy voices,
To bear to this retreat our helpless children.

Alf. Ah wanderers too young! ah hapless children!
But more unhappy Sire! who cannot give,
To those he loves, protection.

Elt. Thou too, Alfred,
Art thou not unattended? None to serve thee,
To soothe thy woes, to watch thy broken slumbers!
And when the silent tear o'erflows thy eye,
None, with the warm and cordial lip of love,
To kiss it off! There is in love a power,
There is a soft divinity, that draws
'Transport even from distress; that gives the heart
A certain pang, excelling far the joys
Of gross unfeeling life. Besides, my Alfred,
Even had the fury of this barbarous foe
Not forc'd me from the convent, life is short:
And now it trembles on the wing of danger:
Why should we lose it then? One well-fav'd hour,
In such a tender circumstance to lovers,
Is better than an age of common time.

Alf. Oh 'tis too much! thy tenderness o'ercomes me!
Nay, look not on me with that sweet dejection,
'Thro' tears that pierce my soul!—Chear thee, my love;

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Hope still the best; that better days await us,
And fairer from remembrance.—Thou, Eltruda,
Thou art a pledge of happiness!—On thee
Good angels wait; they led thy journey hither:
And I have heard them in this wild retreat,
Warbling immortal airs, and strains of comfort.
But ah, the foe is round us: and this isle
Now holds my soul's best wealth, the treasur'd store
Of all my joys—I go to skirt it round,
To visit every creek and sedgy bank,
Where rustles thro' the reeds the shadowy gale;
Or where the bending umbrage drinks the stream;
Lest danger unawares should steal upon us.
And now by slow degrees, solemn and sad,
Wide falling o'er the world, the nightly shades
Hush the brown woods, and deepen all their horrors:
While humbled into rest, and aw'd by darkness,
Each creature seeks the covert. To that cell
Retire, my life. I will not long be absent.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

ALFRED *alone.*

'TIS now the depth of darkness and repose.
 All nature seems to rest: while Alfred wakes
 To think, and to be wretched—Where yon oak
 With wide and dusky shade o'erhangs the stream,
 That glides in silence by, I took my stand:
 What time the glow-worm thro' the dewy path
 First shot his twinkling flame. I stood attentive,
 Listening each noise from wood-clad hill and dale;
 But all was hush'd around. Nor trumpet's clang,
 Nor shout of roving foe, nor hasty tread
 Of evening passenger, disturb'd the wide
 And awful stillness. Homeward as I sped,
 O'er many a delve, thro' many a path perplex'd,
 Maze running into maze; ill-boding thoughts
 Haunted my steps.—Perhaps my gallant friend,
 Discover'd to the Danes, this moment bleeds
 Beneath their swords! or lies a breathless corse,
 The prey of midnight wolves. Some mournful sound
 Strikes sudden on my sense.

S C E N E II.

ALFRED, ELTRUDA.

Elt. Here will I lean

On this green bank, to wait the wish'd return
Of morning and my Lord.

Alf. My gentle love,
Eltruda, why to this untimely sky
Expose thy health! The dews of night fall fast;
The chill breeze sighs aloud.

Elt. I could not rest.

Can love repose when apprehension wakes,
And whispers to the heart all dreadful things,
That walk with night and solitude? methought,
In each low murmur of the woods I heard
Th' invading foe—or heard my Alfred groan!
Our tender infants too—their fancy'd cries
Still found within my ears!

Alf. Eltruda, there

I am a woman too; I who should cheer,
And shelter thee from every care. My children!
The thought of what may chance to them, compleats
Their father's sum of woes. O what safe shade
Can screen their opening blossom from the storm
That beats severe on us! Not sweeter buds
The primrose in the vale, nor sooner shrinks,
At Winter's churlish blast—

Elt. Behold, my Lord—

Good angels shield us—What a flood of brightness
Waves round our heads!

Alf. The hermit moves this way.

That wondrous man holds converse with the host
Of higher natures. These far-beaming fires
Were doubtless kindled up at his command,
Be silent and attentive.

S C E N E III.

ALFRED, ELTRUDA, Hermit.

Her. I have heard

Thy fond complainings, Alfred.

Alf. You have then,

Good father, heard the cause that wrings them from
me.

Her. The human race are sons of sorrow born :
And each must have his portion. Vulgar minds
Refuse, or crouch beneath their load : the brave
Bear theirs without repining.

Alf. Who can bear

The shaft that wounds him through an infant's side ?
When whom we love, to whom we owe protection,
Implore the hand we cannot reach to save them ?

Her. Weep not, Eltruda.—Yet thou art a king,
All private passions fall before that name.
Thy subjects claim thee whole.

Alf. Can public trust,

O reverend sage ! destroy the softer ties
That twine around the parent's yearning heart ?

That holy passion Heaven itself infus'd,
And blended with the stream that feeds our life.

Her. You love your children, prince——

Alf. Lives there on earth,
In air; or ocean, creature tame or wild,
That has not known this universal love?
All Nature feels it intimate and deep,
And all her sons of instinct or of reason.

Her. Then shew that passion in its noblest form.
Season their tender years with every virtue,
Social or self-retir'd; of public greatness,
Or lovely in the hour of private life;
With all that can exalt, or can adorn
Their princely rank.

Alf. Alas, their hope must stoop,
Such my unhappy fate, to humbler aims;
Affliction and base want must be their teachers.

Her. Affliction is the wholesome soil of virtue:
Where patience, honour, sweet humanity,
Calm fortitude take root, and strongly flourish.
But prosperous fortune, that allures with pleasure,
Dazzles with pomp, and undermines with flattery,
Poisons the soul, and its best product kills.
Should'st thou regain thy throne——

Alf. My throne? What glimpse,
What smallest ray of hope——

Her. That day may come——

What do I feel? my labouring breast expands
To give the glorious inspiration room.
And now the cloud that o'er thy future fate,

Like total night, lay heavy and obscure,
 Fades into air : and all the brightening scene
 Dawns gay before me ! a long line of kings,
 From thee descending, glorious and renown'd,
 In shadowy pomp I see !

Genius of England ! hovering near,

In all thy radiant charms appear :

O come and summon, from the world unknown,
 Those mighty chiefs, those sons of future fame,
 Who, ages hence, this island shall adorn,
 And spread to distant realms her glorious name.
 Slow let the visionary form arise,
 And solemn pass before our wond'ring eyes.

[*Music grand and awful. The Genius descending,
 sings the following*

S O N G.

- “ From those eternal regions bright,
 “ Where suns, that never set in night,
 “ Diffuse the golden day :
 “ Where spring, unfading, pours around,
 “ O'er all the dew-impearled ground,
 “ Her thousand colours gay :
 “ O whether on the fountain's flowery side,
 “ Whence living waters glide,
 “ Or in the fragrant grove,
 “ Whose shade embosoms peace and love,
 “ New pleasures all your hours employ,
 “ And ravish every sense with joy :

- " Great heirs of empire! yet unborn,
 " Who shall this island late adorn;
 " A monarch's drooping thought to cheer,
 " Appear! appear! appear!

*Spirits of EDWARD III. PHILIPPA his Queen, and the
Black Prince his Son, arise.*

Her. Alfred, look; and say,
What seest thou yonder?

Alf. Three majestic shapes:
Two habited like mighty warriors old;
A third in whose bright aspect beauty smiles
More soft and feminine. A lucid veil,
From her fair neck dependent floats around,
Light-hovering in the gale.

Her. O Alfred, man
Belov'd of Heaven, behold a king indeed:
Matchless in arms; in arts of peaceful rule,
A sovereign's truest glory, yet more fam'd;
England's third Edward! — At his fear'd approach,
Proud France, even now, through all her dukedoms
quakes.

Her genius sighs, and from th' eternal shore,
The soul of her great Charles, a recent guest,
Looks back to earth, and mourns the distant woes,
His realms are doom'd to feel from Edward's wrath.
Beneath his standard, Britain shall go forth,
Array'd for conquest, terrible in glory:
And nations shrink before her. O what deaths,

What desolation shall her vengeance spread,
 From engines yet unsound; whose lightnings flash,
 Whose thunders roar amazing o'er the plain:
 As if this king had summon'd from on high
 Heaven's dread artillery to fight his battles!

Nor is renown in war his sole ambition:
 A nobler passion labours in his breast——
 Alfred, attend—to make his people blest!
 The sacred rights that reason loudly claims
 For free-born men—these, Alfred, are his care:
 Oft to confirm, and fix them on the base
 Of equal laws—O father of mankind!
 Successive praises from a grateful land
 Shall saint thy name for ever!

Alf. Holy sage,

Whom angels thus enlighten and inspire,
 My bosom kindles at thy Heaven-born flame.
 Great Edward! be thy conquest and their praise
 Unrival'd to thyself. But O thy fame
 For care paternal of the public weal,
 For England blest at home—my rapt heart pants
 To equal that renown!

Her. Know farther, Alfred;
 A sovereign's great example forms a people.
 The public breast is noble, or is vile,
 As he inspires it. In this Edward's time,
 Warm'd by his courage, by his honour rais'd,
 High flames the British spirit like the sun,
 To shine o'er half the globe; and where it shines,
 The cherish'd world to brighten and enrich.

Last see this monarch in his hour of leisure :
 Even social on a throne, and tasting joys
 To solitary greatness seldom known,
 As friend, as husband, and as father blest.
 That godlike youth remark, his eldest hope,
 Who gives new lustre to the name he ~~bears~~;
 A hero ere a man.—I see him now
 On Cressy's glorious plain! The father's heart,
 With anxious love and wonder at his daring,
 Beats high in mingled transport. Great himself,
 Great above jealousy, the guilty mark
 That brands all meaner minds, see he applauds
 The filial excellence, and gives him scope
 To blaze in his full brightness!—Lo, again
 He sends him dreadful to a nobler field :
 The danger and the glory all his own!
 A captive king, the rival of his arms,
 I see adorn his triumph! Heaven! what grace,
 What splendor from his gracious temper mild
 That triumph draws! As gentle mercy kind,
 He cheers the hostile prince whose fall he weeps!

Alf. A son so rich in virtues, and so grac'd
 With all that gives those virtues fair to shine,
 When I would ask of Heaven some mighty boon,
 Should claim the foremost place.

Her. Remember, then,
 What to thy infant sons from thee is due,
 As parent and as prince.

Elt. Forgive me, Hermit,
 Forgive a queen and wife her anxious fondness.

Yon beauteous shade, that as I gaze her o'er,
My wonder draws, escapes your graver thought.

Her. O bright Eltruda! thou whose blooming
youth,

Whose amiable sweetness promise blessings
To Alfred and to England! see, and mark,
In yonder pleasing form, the best of wives,
The happiest too, repaid with all the faith,
With all the friendship, love and duty claim.
She, powerful o'er the heart her charms enslave—
O virtue rarely practis'd!—uses nobly
That happy influence; to prompt each purpose
Fair honour kindles in her Edward's breast.
Amid the pomps, the pleasures of a court,
Humble of heart, severely good; the friend
Of modest worth, the parent of the poor.
Eltruda! O transmit these noblest charms
To that fair daughter, that unfolding rose,
With which, as on this day *, Heaven crown'd your
loves.

The spirit of ELIZABETH rises.

Alf. Say, who is she, in whom the noble graces,
Th' engaging manner, dignity and ease,
Are join'd with manly sense and resolution?

* This mask was written to be acted at Clifden, on the birth-day of her Royal Highness the Princess Augusta.

Her. The great Eliza. She, amid a world
That threat'ning swells in high commotion round her;
Each dangerous state her unrelenting foe,
And chief a proud enormous empire stretch'd
O'er half mankind; with not one friendly power,
But what her kind creating hand shall raise
From out the marshes of the branching Rhine;
And min'd, at home, her ever-tottering throne
By restless bigots, who, beneath the mask
Of mild religion, are to every crime
Set loose, the faithless sons of barbarous zeal:
Yet she shall crown this happy isle with peace,
With arts, with riches, grandeur, and renown:
And quell, by turns, the madness of her foes.
As when the winds, from different quarters, urge
The tempest on our shore: secure, the cliffs
Repel its idle rage, and pour it back,
In broken billows, foaming to the main.

Alf. How shall she, Hermit, gain these glorious ends?

Her. By silent wisdom, whose informing power
Works unperceiv'd; that seems in council slow;
But, when resolv'd, and ripe for execution,
That parts like lightning from the secret gloom:
By ever seizing the right point of view,
Her truest interest; which she firm pursues,
With steady patience, through the maze of state,
The storm of opposition, the mix'd views,
And thwarting manag'd passions of mankind:
By healing the divisions of her people,
And sowing that fell pest among her foes:

By saving, from the vermin of a court,
Her treasure; which, when fair occasion calls,
She knows to lavish, in protecting arts,
In guarding nations, and in nursing states :
By calling up to power, and public life,
Each virtue, each ability : yet *she*,
Amid the various worthies glowing round her,
Still shines the first; the central sun that wakes,
That rules their every motion; not the slave,
And passive property of her own creatures.
But the great soul that animates her reign,
That lights it to perfection, is the love,
The confidence unbounded, which her wisdom,
Her probity and justice, shall inspire
Into the public breast. Hence cordial faith,
Which nought can shake; hence unexhausted treasure :

And hence, above all mercenary force,
The hand that by the free-born heart is rais'd,
And guards the blended weal of Prince and People.
She too shall raise Britannia's naval power;
Shall greatly ravish from insulting Spain,
The world-commanding sceptre of the deep.

Elt. O matchless queen! O glory of her sex!
The great idea, father, fills my soul,
And bids it glow beyond a woman's passions.

The spirit of WILLIAM III. arises.

Her. Once more, O Alfred, raise thine eyes, and
mark,

Who next adorns the scene, yon laurel'd *shade*.
Ere yet the age that clos'd this female reign
Hath led around its train of circling years,
Shall Britain on the verge of ruin stand.
A monarch, lost to greatness, to renown,
The slave of dreaming monks, shall fill her throne.
Weak and aspiring; fond of lawless rule,
The lawless rule his mean ambition covets
Unequal to acquire. Yon prince thou saw'st,
To glory tutor'd by the hand severe
Of sharp adversity, shall Heaven upraise,
And injur'd nations with joint call invoke,
Their last, their only refuge. Lo! he comes:
Wide o'er the billows of the boundless deep
His navy rides triumphant: and the shores
Of shouting Albion echo with his name.
Immortal William! from before his face,
Flies Superstition, flies oppressive Power,
With vile Servility that crouch'd and kiss'd
The whip he trembled at. From this great hour
Shall Britain date her rights and laws restor'd:
And one high purpose rule her sovereign's heart;
To scourge the pride of France, that foe profess'd
To England and to Freedom. Yet I see,
From distant climes in peaceful triumph borne,

Another KING arise! His early youth
 With verdant laurel crown'd, for deeds of arms
 That Reason's voice approves; for courage, rais'd
 Beyond all aid from passion, greatly calm!
 Intrepidly serene!——In days of peace,
 Around his throne the human virtues wait,
 And fair adorn him with their mildest beams;
 Good without show, above ambition great;
 Wise, equal, merciful, the friend of man!

O Alfred! should thy fate, long ages hence,
 In meaning scenes recall'd, exalt the joy
 Of some glad festal day, before a *prince*
 Sprung from that king belov'd —— Hear, gracious
 Heaven!

Thy soft humanity, thy patriot heart,
 Thy manly virtue, steady, great, resolv'd,
 Be his supreme ambition! and with these,
 The happiness, the glory, that await
 Thy better days, be shower'd upon his head!

Alf. O Hermit! thou hast rais'd me to new life!
 New hopes, new triumphs swell my bounding heart——

Her. It comes! it comes!——The promis'd scene
 discloses!

Already the great work of fate begins!
 The mighty wheels are turning, whence will spread,
 Beyond the limits of our narrow world,
 The fair dominions, Alfred, of thy sons.
 Behold the warrior bright with Danish spoils!——
 The raven droops his wings—and hark! the trumpet,
 Exulting, speaks the rest.

S C E N E IV.

Symphony of martial Music.

ALFRED, ELTRUDA, Hermit, *Earl of DEVON, followed by soldiers.*

Alf. My friend return'd!

O welcome, welcome! But what happy tidings
Smile in thy chearful countenance?—

Dev. My Liege,

Your troops have been successful.—But to Heaven
Ascend the praise! For sure th' event exceeds
The hand of man.

Alf. How was it, noble Devon?

Dev. You know my castle is not hence far distant,
Thither I sped: and in a Danish habit
The trenches passing, by a secret way,
Known to myself alone, emerg'd at once
Amid my joyful soldiers. There I found
A generous few, the veteran, hardy gleanings
Of many a hapless fight. They with a fierce
Heroic fire inspirited each other;
Resolv'd on death, disdaining to survive
The dearest country.—“ If we fall, I cry'd,
“ Let us not tamely fall like passive cowards!
“ No; let us live—or let us die, like men!
“ Come on, my friends: to Alfred we will cut
“ Our glorious way; or, as we nobly perish,
“ Will offer to the genius of our country

“ Whole hecatombs of Danes.”—As if one soul
 Had mov’d them all, around their heads they flash’d
 Their flaming faulchions, — “ Lead us to these Danes!
 “ Our country!—vengeance!” was the general cry,
 Strait on the careless drousy camp we rush’d:
 And rapid, as the flame devours the stubble,
 Bore down the heartless Danes. With this success
 Our enterprize increas’d. Not now contented
 To hew a passage thro’ the flying herd;
 We, unremitting, urg’d a total rout.
 The valiant Hubba bites the bloody field,
 With twice six hundred Danes around him strow’d.

Alf. My glorious friend!—this action has restor’d
 Our sinking country.—What reward can equal
 A deed so great?—Is not yon pictur’d Raven
 Their famous magic standard—Emblem fit
 To speak the savage genius of the people—
 That oft has scatter’d on our troops dismay,
 And feeble consternation?

Dev. ’Tis the same.

Wrought by the sisters of the Danish king,
 Of furious Ivar, in a midnight hour:
 While the sick moon, at their enchanted song,
 Wrapt in pale tempest, labour’d thro’ the clouds,
 The Demons of destruction then, they say,
 Were all abroad, and mixing with the woof
 Their baleful power; the sisters ever sung,
 “ Shake, standard, shake, this ruin on our foes.”

Her. So these infernal powers, with rays of truth
 Still deck their fables, to delude who trust them.

Alf. But where, my noble cousin, are the rest
Of your brave troops?

Dev. On t' other side the stream,
That half incloses this retreat, I left them.
Rous'd from the fear, with which it was congeal'd,
As in a frost, the country pours again.
'The spirit of our ancestors is up,
'The spirit of the Free! and with a voice
That breathes success, they all demand their king.

Alf. Quick, let us join them, and improve their
ardor.

We cannot be too hasty to secure
The glances of occasion.

S C E N E *the last.*

To them, CORIN, EMMA, kneeling to ALFRED.

Cor. Good my Liege,
Pardon the poor unequal entertainment,
Which we, unknowing——

Alf. Rise, my honest shepherd,
I came to thee a peasant, not a prince :
Thy rural entertainment was sincere,
Plain, hospitable, kind : such as, I hope,
Will ever mark the manners of this nation.
You friendly lodg'd me, when by all deserted :
And shall have ample recompence.

Cor. One boon
Is all I crave.

Alf. Good shepherd, speak thy wish.

Cor. Permission in your wars to serve your grace :
 For tho' here lost in solitary shades,
 A simple swain, I bear an English heart ;
 A heart that burns with rage to see those Danes,
 Those foreign ruffians, those inhuman pirates,
 Oft our inferiors prov'd, thus lord it o'er us.

Alf. Brave countryman, come on. 'Tis such as
 thou,

Who from affection serve, and free-born zeal,
 To guard whate'er is dear and sacred to them,
 That are a king's best honour and defence.

EMMA sings the following SONG.

I.

- " If those who live in shepherd's bower,
 " Press not the rich and stately bed :
 " The new-mown hay and breathing flower
 " A softer couch beneath them spread.

II.

- " If those who sit at shepherd's board,
 " Soothe not their taste by wanton art ;
 " They take what nature's gifts afford,
 " And take it with a chearful heart.

III.

- " If those who drain the shepherd's bowl,
 " No high and sparkling wines can boast ;
 " With wholesome cups they chear the soul,
 " And crown them with the village toast.

IV.

" If those who join in shepherd's sport,
 " Gay dancing on the dazy'd ground,
 " Have not the splendor of a court;
 " Yet love adorns the merry round."

Alf. My lov'd Eltruda! thou shalt here remain,
 With gentle Emma, and this reverend hermit.
 Ye silver streams, that murmuring wind around
 This dusky spot, to you I trust my all!
 O close around her, woods! for her, ye vales,
 Throw forth your flowers, your softest lap diffuse!

And Thou! whose secret and expansive hand
 Moves all the springs of this vast universe,
 Whose government astonishes; who here,
 In a few hours, beyond our utmost hope,
 Beyond our thought, yet doubting, hast clear'd up
 The storm of fate! preserve what thy kind will,
 Thy bountiful appointment, makes so dear
 To human hearts! preserve my queen and children!
 Preserve the hopes of England! while I go
 To finish thy great work, and save my country.

Elt. Go, pay the debt of honour to the public.
 If ever woman, Alfred, lov'd her husband
 More fondly than herself, I claim that virtue,
 That heart-felt happiness. Yet, by our loves
 I swear, that in a glorious death with thee
 I rather would be wrapt, than live long years
 To charm thee from the rugged paths of honour:
 So much I think thee born for beauteous deeds,

And the bright course of glory.

Alf. Matchless woman!

Love, at thy voice, is kindled to ambition.

Be this my dearest triumph, to approve me

A husband worthy of the best Eltruda!

Her. Behold, my lord, our venerable bard,
Aged and blind, him whom the Muses favour.
Yet ere you go, in our lov'd country's praise,
That noblest theme, hear what his rapture breathes.

A N O D E.

I.

" When Britain first, at Heaven's command,

" Arose from out the azure main;

" This was the charter of the land,

" And guardian angels sung this strain:

" Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;

" Britons never will be slaves.

II.

" The nations, not so blest as thee,

" Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall:

" While thou shalt flourish great and free,

" The dread and envy of them all.

" Rule, &c.

III.

" Still more majestic shalt thou rise,

" More dreadful, from each foreign stroke:

" As the loud blast that tears the skies,

" Serves but to root thy native oak."

" Rule, &c.

IV.

- " Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame :
" All their attempts to bend thee down,
" Will but arouse thy generous flame;
" But work their woe, and thy renown.
" Rule, &c.

V.

- " To thee belongs the rural reign;
" Thy cities shall with commerce shine :
" All thine shall be the subject main,
" And every shore it circles thine.
" Rule, &c.

VI.

- " The Muses, still with freedom sound,
" Shall to thy happy coast repair :
" Blest isle! with matchless beauty crown'd,
" And manly hearts to guard the fair.
" Rule, Britannia, rule the waves :
" Britons never will be slaves."

Her. Alfred, go forth! lead on the radiant years,
To thee reveal'd in vision.—Lo! they rise;
Lo! patriots, heroes, sages, croud to birth :
And bards to sing them in immortal verse!
I see thy commerce, Britain, grasp the world :
All nations serve thee; every foreign flood,
Subjected, pays its tribute to the Thames.
Thither the golden South obedient pours
His sunny treasures: thither the soft East
Her spices, delicacies, gentle gifts :

And thither his rough trade the stormy North,
See, where beyond the vast Atlantic surge,
By boldest keels untouch'd, a dreadful space!
Shores yet unfound, arise! in youthful prime,
With towering forests, mighty rivers crown'd!
These stoop to Britain's thunder. This new world,
Shook to its centre, trembles at her name:
And there her sons, with aim exalted, sow
The seeds of rising empire, arts, and arms.

Britons, proceed, the subject deep command,
Awe with your navies every hostile land.
Vain are their threats, their armies all are vain:
They rule the balanc'd world, who rule the main.

T H E E N D.



